

The aristocratic *oikos* on the Vrina Plain, Butrint c. AD 830–1200

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This essay reviews the archaeology of a mid-Byzantine administrative central place – an aristocratic oikos – in the old Roman suburb of Butrint, Albania. Apart from illustrating the many aspects of the excavated evidence, consideration is given to Paul Magdalino's ground-breaking essay on the nature of the Byzantine aristocratic oikos.

Introduction

Various aspects of urban survival have attracted the attention especially of textual historians, as well as field archaeologists. A revised picture, therefore, is slowly beginning to emerge. The process is slow indeed, hampered as it is by the firmly entrenched earlier views that are difficult to supersede. While a new understanding of urban centres during the seventh and eighth centuries is being formulated, the importance of the countryside and aspects of the general 'ruralization' of society are now also being recognized as factors contributing significantly to the general process of transformation.¹

The households of the 'powerful' in Byzantium are therefore a subject which deserves to be studied in depth. Unfortunately, the source-material is extremely meagre by western European standards. There are no surviving household accounts, few wills, and few detailed descriptions of non-imperial secular houses. Hardly any buildings remain above ground, and excavation has not done very much to complete the picture of the Middle Byzantine period.²

This short essay reviews the archaeology of a ninth- to tenth-century central-place immediately outside the southern Albanian ancient port of Butrint. The archaeology indicates that this settlement was the homestead of the *archon* who was known to have been living at Butrint in AD 881. It would therefore appear that this settlement was indeed the

1 S. Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans from Diocletian to Süleyman the Magnificent* (New Haven 2010) 252.

2 P. Magdalino, 'The Byzantine aristocratic *oikos*', in M. Angold (ed.), *The Byzantine aristocracy IX to XII centuries* (Oxford 1984) 94.

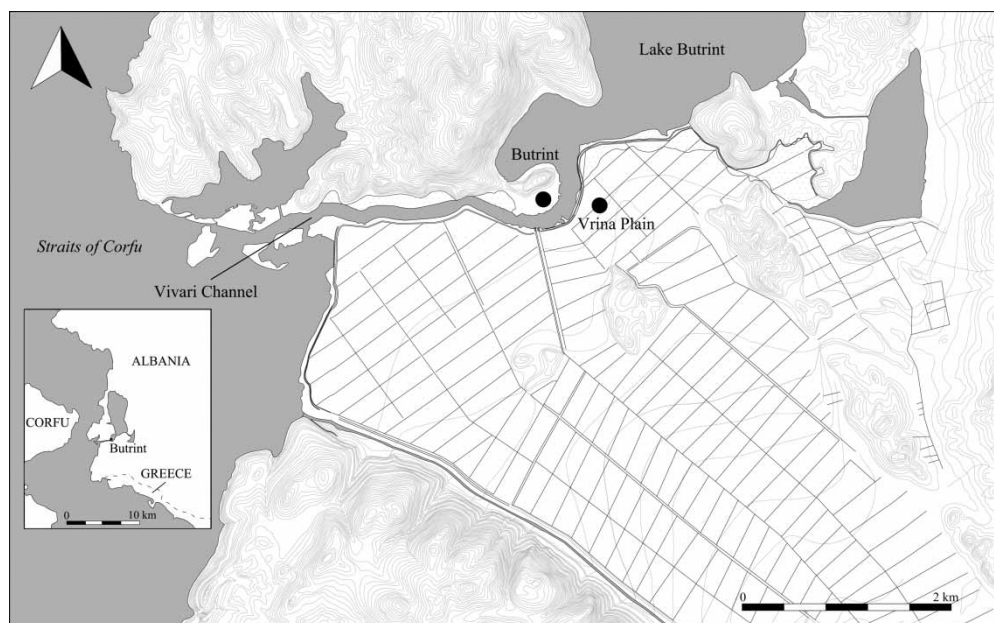


Figure 1 Location map showing the Vrina Plain at Butrint, Albania.

home of a powerful individual or individuals, and belongs to the category of settlements described by Paul Magdalino in his study of the aristocratic *oikos*.

Background

The Vrina Plain lies to the south of the ancient city of Butrint, across the Vivari channel which links Lake Butrint to the Ionian Sea (Fig. 1). Until recently, archaeological investigation of the plain had been limited.³ However, since 1995 the Butrint Foundation has conducted an extensive field survey programme across this area. Through a combination of field-walking and geophysical survey, extensive remains of destroyed masonry structures and associated ceramics were identified.⁴ This led to the conclusion that the area may have been a suburb of Roman Butrint and if this was so that it could be evidence of the colony created by Julius Caesar in 44 BC and re-established by Augustus after his victory at Actium in 31 BC. As a result, since 2002 a major archaeological assessment

3 L. M. Ugolini, *Butrinto: Il Mito D'Enea gli Scavi* (Rome 1937); Dh. Budina, *Harta Akeologjike e bregdetit Jon he Pellgut te Delvines* (Iliria 1971) 275–342.

4 D. Bescoby, 'Geoarchaeological investigations at Roman Butrint', in I. L. Hansen and R. Hodges (eds), *Roman Butrint: an assessment* (Oxford 2007) 95–118; P. N. Chroston and M. W. Hounslow, 'The geophysical survey – the extent and structural layout of the suburbs of Butrint on the Vrina Plain', in R. Hodges, W. Bowden and K. Lako (eds), *Byzantine Butrint, Excavations and surveys 1994–99* (Oxford 2004) 64–75; M. Pluciennik et al., 'The environs of Butrint 2: The 1995–96 field survey', in R. Hodges, W. Bowden and K. Lako (eds), *Byzantine Butrint*, 47–63.

has been undertaken on the Vrina Plain in order to test this hypothesis and to understand the extent and character of the archaeological remains.⁵

As well as elucidating important information on the Roman and Late Antique development of the Vrina Plain, perhaps the most remarkable discovery made by the Butrint Foundation's project was a Middle Byzantine nucleus comprising a major residential area, workshops, a cemetery and perhaps a chapel (Fig. 2), associated with which were 5 seals, 1 silver miliaresion and 49 bronze folles spanning the period c. AD 820–950. The latter would appear to indicate that this was an administrative centre, and in all probability the place from which the ancient centre of Butrint was governed between c. AD 825–975. As a centre, it was in contemporary terms an aristocratic *oikos*.⁶ This was a social unit as well as a place, an organism according to the literary tropes of the Middle Byzantine period, comprising the master of the house, his wife and children, his servants and slaves⁷ and quite possibly craftsmen in his employ.⁸

Why exactly Butrint as an administrative centre in the ninth century moved out of the old fortified urban nucleus and was relocated in the ruins of the erstwhile suburb remains a mystery. The new situation was not a foundation that might be described as *ex novo* as, for example, was the case with many new trading towns located beyond the Roman walls of post-Roman north-west Europe.⁹ In this case there had been a Roman nucleus that for much of its history formed an integral part of colonial Butrint rather than an appendage, a suburb.¹⁰ After this, a major church was founded here, which possibly for a time was associated with a monastery.¹¹ This certainly would have given some identity to the nucleus; in other words this was not 'a non-place' in the sense that the emporia of north-west Europe, where trading was not encouraged, evolved as non-places with minimal textual descriptions, outside or close to places

5 S. Greenslade, R. Hodges, S. Leppard, and J. Mitchell, 'Preliminary report on the early Christian basilica on the Vrina Plain, Albania', *Archeologia Medievale* (2006) 397–408; A. Crowson and O. J. Gilkes, 'The archaeology of the Vrina Plain: assessment', in Hansen and Hodges (eds), *Roman Butrint: an assessment*, 119–64; S. Greenslade with Dh. Çondi, 'Recent excavations on the Vrina Plain, Butrint', in P. Cabanes and J.-L. Lamboley (eds), *Illyrie méridionale et l'Épire dans l'antiquité*. V (Paris 2011) 265–77; S. Greenslade, 'The Vrina Plain settlement between the 1st–13th centuries AD', in I. L. Hansen, R. Hodges, and S. Leppard (eds), *Butrint 4: the archaeology and histories of an Ionian town* (Oxford, 2012) 207–42.

6 Magdalino, 'The Byzantine aristocratic *oikos*'.

7 *Ibid.*, 95.

8 *Ibid.*, 96.

9 R. Hodges, *Towns and trade in the Age of Charlemagne* (London 2000).

10 S. Greenslade, 'The Vrina Plain settlement between the 1st–13th centuries AD', in Hansen, Hodges, and Leppard (eds), *Butrint 4: the archaeology and histories of an Ionian town*.

11 J. Mitchell, O. Gilkes, and Dh. Çondi, 'A new Christian basilica at Butrint', *Candavia* 2 (2005) 107–28; Greenslade et al., 'Preliminary report on the early Christian basilica on the Vrina Plain, Albania', *Archeologia Medievale* (2006) 397–408; Greenslade, 'The Vrina Plain settlement between the 1st–13th centuries AD', in Hansen, Hodges, and Leppard (eds), *Butrint 4: the archaeology and histories of an Ionian town*.

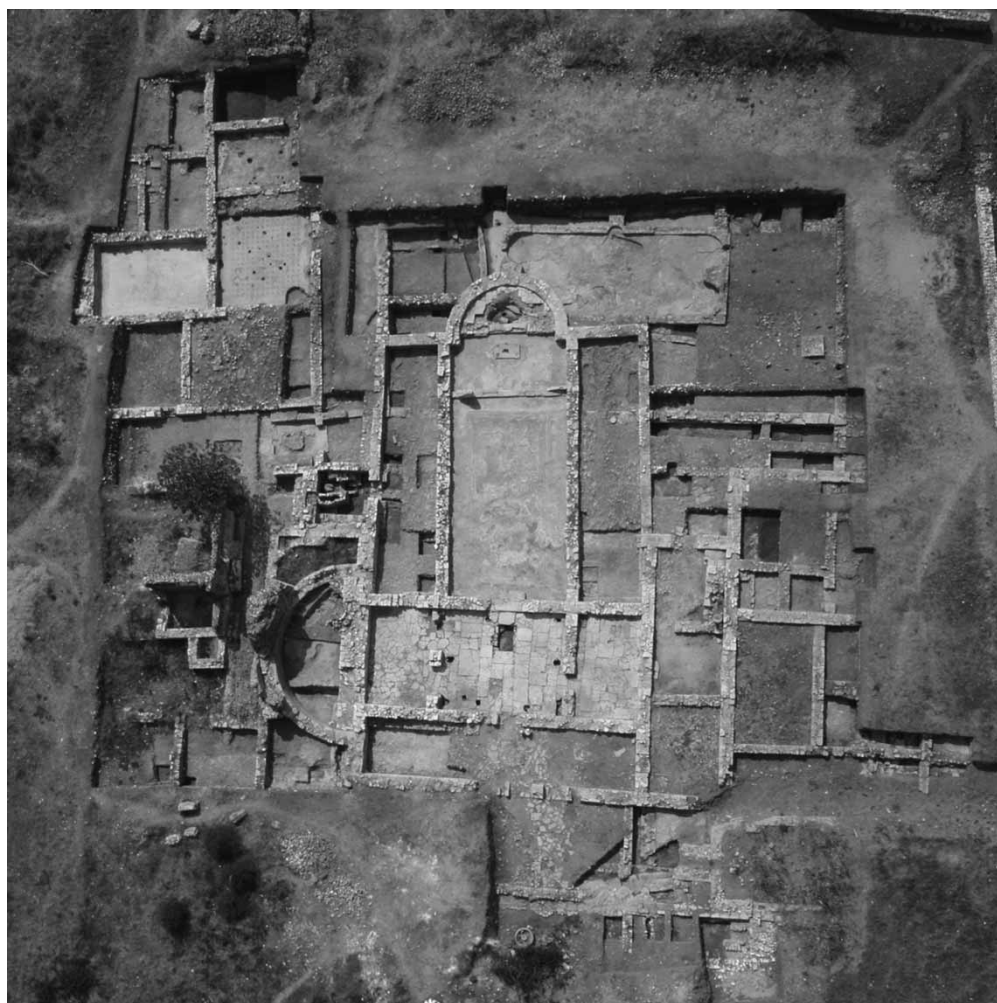


Figure 2 Aerial view of the 9th to 10th-century Vrina Plain settlement (Alket Islami).

with defined administrative identities.¹² But curiously the Vrina Plain church had been partially burnt, probably either in late antiquity or at the time around AD 800 that the first Middle Byzantine *kastron* was sacked in the Western Defences.¹³ Thus, in the second quarter of the ninth century when the new Middle Byzantine nucleus was established here, much though perhaps not all of the earlier church lay in ruins. Why, we must

12 Hodges, *Towns and trade*; M. Augé, *Non-places. Introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity* (London 1995).

13 R. Hodges, S. Kamani, M. Logue, and J. Vroom, 'The sack of Butrint, c.AD 800', *Antiquity* 83 (320): <http://www.antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/hodges> (2009); S. Kamani, 'Butrint in the mid-Byzantine period: a new interpretation', *BMGS* 35/2 (2011) 115–33.

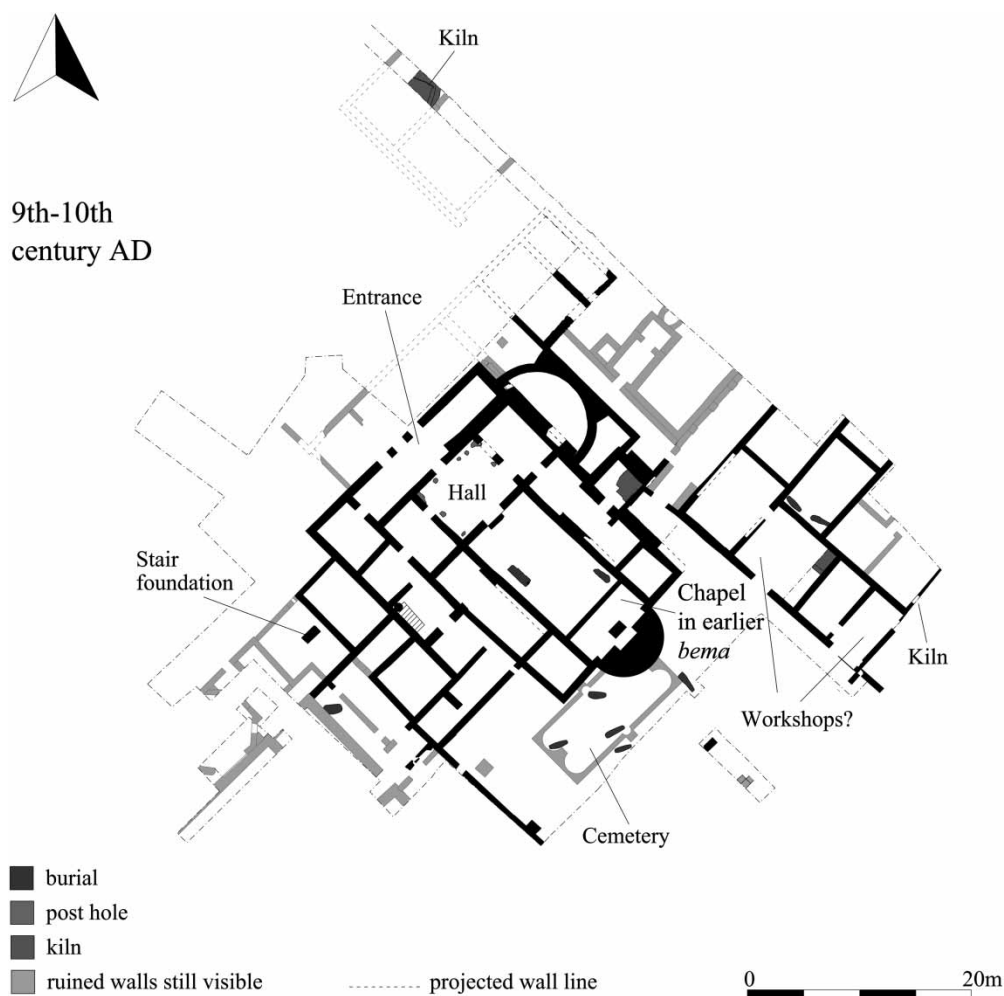


Figure 3 Annotated plan of the 9th- to 10th-century Vrina Plain settlement.

ask, was the acropolis of Butrint, or indeed another section of the old Roman town, eschewed at this time in favour of the unfortified location on the Vrina Plain?¹⁴

Before focusing upon this key question let us briefly review the archaeology of this new, short-lived aristocratic administrative place that was an ‘extra-mural’ Butrint.

The archaeology of the aristocratic *oikos*

The aristocratic *oikos* was made within the well-preserved remains of a fifth-century ecclesiastical complex – a single-apsed church with associated buildings (Fig. 3). The

14 W. Bowden and R. Hodges, *Butrint 3. Excavations of the Triconch Palace* (Oxford 2011); W. Bowden and R. Hodges, ‘An “ice age settling on the Roman empire”: Post-Roman Butrint between strategy and serendipity’, in N. Christie and A. Augenti (eds), *Urbes Extinctae* (Aldershot 2012) 207–42.

archaeology was complex, given the nature of the re-use of an earlier building, part of which – the chancel – was almost certainly retained in use. Most of the associated deposits appear to be secondary, that is these post-date the abandonment of the aristocratic *oikos* (see below). However, the post-hole structures, the graves and the evidence for the workshop are all primary features attesting to a settlement which, on the bases of the 49 coins and 5 seals, as well as decorated metalwork and ceramics, dates from at least the 820s to 960s. Radio-carbon dates support this, as we shall see in the case of the dated skeletal remains below. However, the earliest date for the ninth-century settlement must be treated with caution, as Byzantine coins were extremely uncommon in this region before the circulation of folles issued by Michael II (820–29) during the 820s.¹⁵ It is possible that the church was occupied from the earlier ninth century, although the distinctive Avaro-Slavic ceramic wares dated to around AD 800, found in the excavations of Towers 1 and 2 in the Western Defences of the *kastron*, are notably absent.¹⁶ As for the occupation of the settlement after the 960s, this is not in doubt. However, the later phase of occupation was not characterized by the presence of either coins or seals. Indeed, the anonymous folles of Basil II (976–1025), which are so common within the walled area of Butrint, are almost absent on the Vrina Plain.¹⁷

The main elements of the aristocratic *oikos* are as follows:

The hall

The first floor hall, the principal chamber of the new house, measured 15.63 x 5.88 m internally and was located above the former narthex of the late antique basilica, the floor of which was partially supported by a series of large posts, fire-blasted through the underlying paving stones. The hall was accessed from the west where a further first floor chamber, possibly a service room was located.¹⁸ Measuring 13.23 x 3.76 m this room ran along the western end of the earlier building. A staircase at the southern end of the room provided a means of access to the rooms below. Part of a large grey marble column was placed at the northern end of the stair block to support the new staircase.

15 P. Papadopoulou, 'The numismatic evidence from the southern Adriatic (5th–11th centuries): some preliminary thoughts', in S. Gelichi and R. Hodges (eds), *From one sea to the other: trading places in the European and Mediterranean Early Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2012) 297–320; see also C. Morrisson, 'Byzantine money: its production and circulation', in A. E. Laiou (ed.), *The economic history of Byzantium: from the seventh through the fifteenth century*, III (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39), (Washington D.C. 2002) 954–8; C. Morrisson, 'La Sicile byzantine: une lueur dans les siècles obscurs', *Quaderni ticinesi di numismatica e antichità classiche* 27 (1999) 307–34.

16 Hodges et al., 'The sack of Butrint'; Kamani, 'Butrint in the mid-Byzantine period'.

17 R. Hodges, 'From Roman insula to medieval quarter', in Bowden and Hodges (eds), *Butrint 3: excavations of the Triconch Palace*, 319–26.

18 R. L. Scranton, *Corinth*, vol. XVI. *Medieval architecture in the central area of Corinth* (Princeton 1957) 39–41; 128–31; pl.3.4.

The ground floor rooms below both chambers were re-organised at this time: the space beneath the central chamber was separated into three rooms with the construction of blocking walls built between the piers of the earlier building; while the space below the western chamber was also separated into three rooms with the construction of similarly built partition walls. No evidence of the use of this ground floor for storage or animals was found. As part of these changes, the eastern apse of the earlier building was also floored over.

Access to the house remained via the triple doorway that had formed the main entrance of the earlier basilica. Directly opposite this, a door was smashed through the western end of a late fifth-century blocking wall that had been built within the wall separating the exonarthex from the narthex. This new door led into the central room directly below the hall and was axially aligned with the main entrance into the nave of the earlier basilica.

The eastern roadway, which had originally connected the western half of the Roman suburb to the main road through the valley and which subsequently became the main access to the eastern entrance of the much earlier, third-century domus, remained in use during this time too. The valley road also seems to have existed at this time with low banks on either side of the road presenting an aspect of a small hollow way. Continuing to be the principal approach to Butrint from the south, it may also have been used by those visiting the owner of the manor house.

As a structure it is tempting to interpret the house as a pseudo triclinium with first-floor residential accommodation and a ground-floor area for animals and storage, an architectural form that was common in this period in the Mediterranean.¹⁹ The two eighth-century Western Defences towers were in essence variants of this architectural arrangement as was the relatively well-preserved phase 9 (AD 550–575) dwelling occupying room 40 of the Merchant's House area situated in a dog-leg in the fortifications beside the Vivari channel.²⁰ The same arrangement also may have been upheld in two other, simpler, timber buildings, perhaps from the tenth to eleventh centuries, which occupied earlier ruins of the Triconch Palace close by in room 19, and rooms 40/43. Both had timber frames, and traces of an external staircase clearly existed in the case of the building occupying rooms 40/43, and may have existed for the building in room 19.²¹

19 B. Polci, 'Some aspects of the transformation of the Roman domus between late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages', in L. Lavan and W. Bowden (eds), *Theory and practice in Late Antique archaeology* (Leiden 2003) 79–112.

20 W. Bowden, Y. Cerova, A. Crowson, and E. Vaccaro, 'The merchant's house and the city wall in the 5th–7th centuries', in W. Bowden and R. Hodges (eds), *Butrint 3: excavations of the Triconch Palace*, 193–7.

21 W. Bowden, A. Culwick, K. Francis, O. Gilkes, K. Lako, and J. Price, 'The 5th- to mid 7th-century occupation of the triconch area', in Bowden and Hodges (eds), *Butrint 3: excavations of the Triconch Palace*, 123–4; W. Bowden, A. Crowson, M. Logue, and A. Sebastiani, 'The medieval occupation of the merchant's house', in Bowden and Hodges (eds), *Butrint 3: excavations of the Triconch Palace*, 209–12; A. Augenti, 'A tale of two cities. Rome and Ravenna between 7th and 9th century AD', in S. Gasparri (ed.) 774. *Ipotesi su una transizione* (Turnhout 2008) 183–92.

The church and aisles

The religious nature of the former site seems to have remained, apparently now focused only on the nave and the bema. Following its abandonment, the interior of the basilica was cleaned out and the superstructure repaired: the arcades, which had collapsed, were patched up and the openings between them were blocked-in; with the new side walls built, the nave and aisles were re-roofed; both floor mosaics in the nave and bema were uncovered and the step in front of the main north entrance into the nave was extended over the mosaic; a new altar was dedicated within the bema, supported by a pink-white marble column placed centrally over the foundation stone of the earlier altar; and due to an enduring weakness in the area of the bema, the original chancel screen was replaced by a more robust barrier made from a mix of large stone blocks, scavenged from the surrounding ruinous buildings, to form a diaphragm-wall to support the roof. In sum, the church was reduced to the bema, approached by way of the old nave, in the floor of which several graves were interred.

As a result of the blocking in of the arcades, the aisles seem to have become more utilitarian. The original floors of these spaces were robbed and a rough tile floor surface laid in both. The role of the western aisle is unclear; no obvious indications of use were found, although two very well preserved bronze chains were found lying on this floor at the southern end of the room that seem to have been part of a steelyard balance mechanism. The eastern aisle became a workshop associated with a large pottery kiln, which was built in the small room that opened off this aisle. The exact date of this mid-Byzantine kiln has yet to be established.

Cemetery

Within the nave of the fifth-century basilica, two graves cut through the borders of the earlier mosaic pavement, apparently following the border's alignment. Of these, the western burial, which had been marked by a footstone at the southern end, contained the body of a young male aged between 16 and 24. An ornamented bronze belt buckle and strap end were found above his pelvis (Fig. 4).

A secondary cemetery, possibly for the community/retainers under the official's jurisdiction, was made in the area of the in-filled Roman garden pools, with contemporary outlying burials also interred in the eastern range of the earlier Roman buildings as well as in its western range. Orientated east-west, the burials were stone lined and capped. In one a young female had been interred with bronze earrings in her ears and two silver earrings tied by cord around her neck. Radio Carbon 14 dating has produced a date range of AD 870–1010 for this burial. Another burial of an adult male, Carbon 14 dated AD 770–980, was found on the base of the outer pool of the fountain to the south of the apse; the man apparently buried with a coin of Leo VI (886–912).

Apart from the individual buried with the coin, who is thought to have been aged 40–50 at the time of his death, all the other individuals appear to have died at a fairly



Figure 4 Ornamental buckle from the grave along the western side of the nave (James Barclay-Brown).

young age. These individuals also all display early signs of arthritis indicative of performing hard physical labour from an early age. Moreover, four of the individuals showed traces of having suffered from scurvy; while the indications of anaemia in a number of the skeletons suggest periods of endemic malarial outbreaks.

Clearly, not all the occupants of the household here were identified in the excavations. Nevertheless, the small cemeteries resemble in size and grave-form those of the eleventh century found within Butrint at the Triconch Palace excavations,²² as well as in the small graveyard of the church by the ancient well of Junia Rufina.²³

Ancillary buildings

Many of the walls of the earlier buildings associated with the earlier domus and subsequent basilica remained standing at this time. Although in various states of repair, there are indications that some of the rooms were re-occupied. To the west, the late fifth-century building outside the western chamber appears to have been re-used. A new external staircase on the western side of the building led to a first floor that would have connected with the western room off the central hall.

To the east, small workshops with associated kilns appear to have been set up in some of the dilapidated rooms of the eastern wing of the earlier Roman domus, the

22 Bowden and Hodges, 'Ice age settling on the Roman empire'.

23 A. Sebastiani, 'Butrinto. Relazione preliminare dello scavo presso il Pozzo di Iunia Rufina', *Archaeologia Medievale* 35 (2008) 254–5.

walls of which are thought to have remained standing almost to roof height. The original doorways of the two southern rooms remained accessible from the area to the west and it may be that these identify two separate dwellings: the northern room had a kiln in the south-eastern corner of the room and doorways in its eastern and northern walls, the eastern space beyond possibly being an open space as two burials were interred within this space; while the southern room had doors in its northern and southern walls.

Further industrial activity was also found within the area of the original public bath-house of the suburb to the north-east. Abandoned by the mid-fourth century, the building was re-used at this time following the construction of a large kiln in the northern room of the building. The reuse may have been due to the proximity of the channel edge, as water was needed for the new industry practiced from this room.

Defences?

All the archaeological evidence suggests that the Vrina Plain aristocratic *oikos* was unfortified. The geophysical survey produced no evidence of defences beyond the limits of the excavations. Furthermore, no traces of any fortifications were found in the excavations. This is all the more remarkable given the apparent sack of the late eighth-century towers in the Western Defences, and the history of civil unrest in the southern Balkans during the earlier ninth century.²⁴ Nevertheless, in an apparent break with the immediate past, a location outside the fortifications raised in the early sixth century was considered secure. However, the end of the household appears to coincide with a return to the fortified urban settlement when the walls were extensively refurbished in the later tenth- or early eleventh-centuries.²⁵

Material culture

The material culture is very different from the later eighth-century finds from the excavations of the Western Defences of Butrint.²⁶ In the Western Defences, the material culture comprised a mixture of East Mediterranean and Apulian imports besides local wares and a variety of glassware.²⁷ Bulk goods in the form of large numbers of amphorae appeared to be absent. Instead, the finds resembled the mixed cargoes of several occasional ships. Put another way, Butrint as located in the Western Defences was a

24 F. Curta, *Southeastern Europe in the Middle Ages 500–1250* (Cambridge 2006) 134–47.

25 W. Bowden and R. Hodges, *Butrint 3. Excavations of the Triconch Palace*; R. Hodges, *The rise and fall of Byzantine Butrint* (London 2008). A similar harbourside mid-Byzantine settlement has been discovered outside the late Roman fortifications of ancient Aegina: see C. Pennas, *Byzantine Aegina* (Athens 2005) 14–15. (Our thanks to Sarah Morris for this reference.)

26 R. Hodges et al., 'The sack of Butrint, c.AD 800', *Antiquity* 83 (320): <http://www.antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/hodges> (2009); Kamani, 'Butrinto in the mid-Byzantine period'.

27 J. Vroom, 'From one coast to another: early medieval ceramics in the southern Adriatic region, Comacchio', in Gelichi and Hodges (eds) *From one sea to the other*, 353–93.

centre of consumption with limited evidence of either production or involvement in the commerce of significant cargoes. The Vrina Plain settlement, by contrast, produced evidence of administration in terms of seals,²⁸ plentiful coins (predominantly minted at Syracuse) and ceramic production, and almost fifty per cent of the pottery – chiefly small globular amphorae – was imported from the Apulian port of Otranto. These remains suggest a marked switch of emphasis towards managed production and Ionian Sea (southern Adriatic) commerce. The seals, in particular, also strongly suggest that this was a central-place, effectively adopting the regional status and management of (the largely deserted) Butrint during this period.

In the light of the numismatic evidence, this material culture is hardly a surprise. Since Cécile Morrisson identified in 1999 the importance of Sicily's Syracuse mint during the ninth century (before the island was lost by the Byzantines to the Aghlabids), there has been growing evidence of a major nexus of western Byzantine trade encompassing the region between the western Balkans, southern Italy, Malta and eastern Sicily.²⁹ Now, it appears from the numismatic evidence that this Sicilian-managed trading network also reached up to certain ports on the Tyrrhenian coast as far north as Luni in Liguria,³⁰ and involved Malta on a significant scale.³¹ The Tyrrhenian numismatic data suggests that the trade was transacted through partnerships, directed towards specific central-places and their administrators and not ubiquitous to all coastal sites in this region.³² Probably the same was true for the western Balkans where Sicilian coins of the ninth century dominate the coin assemblages as far south as Corinth.³³

The few pieces of high-status metalwork of tenth-century date found in the excavations, including the ornate buckle-plate from the grave along the western side of the nave and a buckle with a plate formed of twin stems with pearled heart-shaped terminals from a room of the old domus immediately to the west of the nave of the basilica, would appear to be locally manufactured. A close parallel for the openwork buckle from the grave has been found in a burial at Palaeokastritsa on Corfu.³⁴ There is no clear reason to think that they were not the work of metal smiths working in the region, possibly even at Butrint itself.

28 P. Papadopoulou, 'Five lead seals from Byzantine Butrint (Albania)', *Studies in Byzantine Sigillography* 11, forthcoming.

29 Morrisson, 'La Sicile byzantine'; M. McCormick, *Origins of the European economy* (Cambridge 2001).

30 A. Rovelli, 'Gold, silver and bronze: an analysis of monetary circulation along the Italian coasts', in Gelichi and Hodges (eds), *From one sea to the other*, 267–97.

31 B. Bruno, *Roman and Byzantine Malta. Trade and economy* (Sta Venera 2009) 189–92.

32 A. Rovelli, 'Gold, silver and bronze: an analysis of monetary circulation along the Italian coasts', in Gelichi and Hodges (eds), *From one sea to the other*.

33 Morrisson, 'La Sicile byzantine'; Papadopoulou, 'The numismatic evidence from southern Adriatic (V–XI centuries)'.

34 O. Agalopoulou, 'Palaiokastritsa', *Archaiologikon Deltion* 28 (1973) 423–4.

Discussion

The first-floor dwelling with associated high-status burials, occupying the Vrina Plain church, dates to the mid-ninth to mid-tenth centuries. The material culture shows a steady revival of trade with the heel of Italy, while the ornamental metal fittings and jewellery point to local Balkan connections perhaps including Corfu. The coins and seals confirm the Byzantine administrative role of this household. Certainly, the material culture and art distinguishes the household from anything yet found in the large excavations within the walled town of Butrint, including the Western Defences towers. Little is known from any written sources about Butrint as a town at this time. Arsenios of Corfu (876–953), who apparently visited Epiros to plead with Slav pirates to desist from their raids, recorded that Butrint was rich in fish and oysters, with a fertile hinterland.³⁵ Were these simple local products the bases of Butrint's revival as an Adriatic seaport? The evidence with which to answer this question did not survive. Instead, we must reflect upon other issues to explain the significance of this settlement.

An aristocratic central-place

The five seals (Fig. 5) as well as the large number of coins show that this was a political centre – a Byzantine administrative centre. In all likelihood, this household was the homestead of an official – conceivably an *archon*, the ruler of a region, as we have mentioned – who attended to imperial business on this far western frontier of the Empire. In this sense, then, it was rather different from an estate centre of the same period in western Europe, such as Tissø or Vorbasse in Denmark,³⁶ or Montarrenti in Italy.³⁷ The latter managed their estates with a workforce assembled in dwellings around the elite buildings, whereas the *archon* was an imperial official managing, in effect, a province whose population occupied niches within the ruined ancient town of Butrint as well as in the surrounding coastal littoral.

Was this, then, the residence of the *archon* of Vagenetia, the region opposite Corfu,³⁸ whose seal has been discovered in excavations in Silistra, Bulgaria?³⁹ This seal describes this individual as an imperial *spatharios*.⁴⁰ If so, we should assume that

35 P. Soustal, 'The historical sources for Butrint in the Middle Ages', in Hodges, Bowden and Lako (eds), *Byzantine Butrint. Excavations and Survey 1994–1999*, 22.

36 L. Jørgensen, 'Manor and market at Lake Tissø in the sixth to eleventh centuries: the Danish "productive" sites', in T. Pestell and K. Ulmschneider (eds), *Markets in Early Medieval Europe. Trading and 'Productive' Sites, 650–850* (Bollington 2003) 175–207; C. Wickham, *The inheritance of Rome: a history of Europe from 400 to 1000* (Harmondsworth 2009) 248.

37 F. Cantini, *Lo Scavo Archeologico del Castello di Montarrenti (Siena). Per la Storia della Formazione del Villaggio Medievale in Toscana (Secc. VII–XV)* (Florence 2003); Wickham, *The inheritance of Rome*, 249.

38 E. Chrysos, 'The middle Byzantine period (sixth century – 1204)', in M. B. Sakellariou (ed.), *Epirus. 400 years of Greek history and civilization* (Athens 1997) 184.

39 Hodges, *Byzantine Butrint*.

40 Chrysos, 'Middle Byzantine', 184; Papadopoulou, 'The numismatic evidence from southern Adriatic (5th–11th centuries)'.



Figure 5 Five lead seals (James Barclay-Brown).

this individual managed at least ‘all the western part of Epirus opposite Kerkyra, from around Cheimara (modern Himara) to the north and as far south as Margariton’ (close to Parga) (Fig. 6).⁴¹ This coastal region, of course, included the port of Saranda and above it the great fifth- to sixth-century shrine of Santa Quaranta almost certainly lay within his territory.⁴² Indeed, was this the household at Butrint (*polis epineios*) in which, according to the Vita Eliae iunioris, St. Elias the Younger and his companion, Daniel, were held prisoner at Butrint in AD 881–2, suspected of being Arab spies, on returning from visiting shrines in the Peloponnese?⁴³

As noted above, a young man aged 16–24, interred with a decorated silver-plated belt buckle, was buried in the nave of the old church. Was this, we must ask, the imperial *archon* himself? And what of the older individual buried with the coin? Although he showed signs of arthritis, his ailment was more minor when compared to the rest of the individuals, suggesting a different lifestyle from the others represented. Considering his age, better health and apparent distinction in burial rites, it is possible that this

41 Chrysos, ‘Middle Byzantine’, 184.

42 1 O. Gilkes, R. Hodges, V. Vroom, and K. Kondo, ‘New light on early medieval Saranda, ancient Onchesmos: excavations at the Bashkia of Saranda’, *Annual of the British School at Athens* (forthcoming); J. Mitchell, ‘The archaeology of pilgrimage in late antique Albania: the basilica of the Forty Martyrs’, in W. Bowden, L. Lavan and C. Machado (eds), *Recent research on the Late Antique countryside* (Leiden 2004).

43 *Vita di Sant’ Eli ail Giovane*, ed. and trans. G. Rossi Taibbi, Palermo, Istituto Siciliano di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici. (1962) XVI, 116 (c 73), 182; McCormick, *Origins*, 957, no. 686.

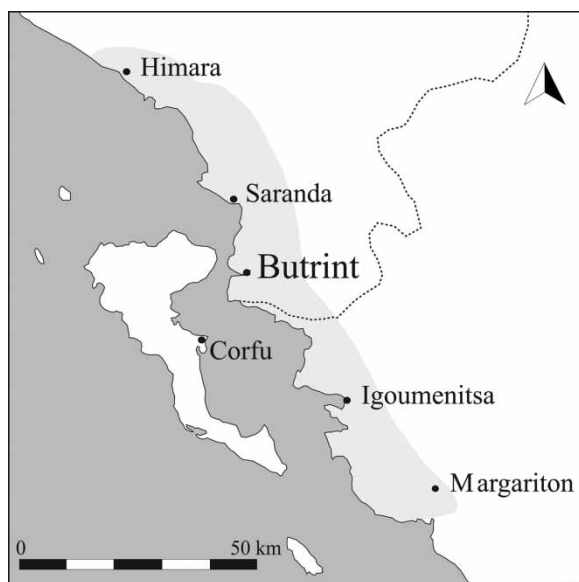


Figure 6 Map showing a hypothetical province of Vagenetia (after E. Chrysos 1997).

man had a closer connection to the presiding household and that rather than being a tenant he may have been part of the official's family.

The location

Why was the Vrina Plain re-occupied by a significant Byzantine administrative household in the ninth century? The household was neither grand nor large.⁴⁴ Occupying an abandoned church and its attendant buildings that had been partially burnt down, the household at its zenith appears to have comprised a small first-floor hall in the earlier narthex as well as a workshop and other storage rooms. The chancel of the earlier church was possibly maintained as a small chapel or at least as a funerary oratory. Finally, the associated cemetery appears to have been used by a family over several generations. There is no trace of a cemetery for associated dependents or the workforce of the presiding official; it may have been located elsewhere, outside the excavated area.

Was this choice of location determined by the conjunction of easier access to the inland region by way of the old Roman road leading from the collapsed (Roman-period) bridge inland, as well as an equally accessible point for landing, processing and selling fish from Lake Butrint? Clearly, the community amounted to little more than a household involved in these activities, albeit one with a distinctive material culture. In other words, there was no urban character to this revival of occupation, nor any evidence of an urban

44 L. Neville, *Authority in Byzantine provincial society, 950–1100* (Cambridge 2004).

revival within the walls of Butrint itself.⁴⁵ Therefore, it was not a miniature version of an administrative urban centre such as Amorium in Turkey or Thessaloniki in Greece. Nor was this an emporium like Comacchio, at the mouth of the river Po, at the head of the Adriatic Sea.⁴⁶ Yet, judging from the seals and many coins, it was a place involved in administration, and probably responsible for managing tolls and customs on behalf of the Empire, which, we might surmise, was why St. Elias came here in AD 881. As such, it was a central-place, one tier down in the settlement hierarchy from the major administrative centres like Amorium and Thessalonike, and possibly more significant than beaching-places for small-scale mixed cargos, cabotage, such as, we might surmise, at Saranda at this time.⁴⁷ In sum, this was implicitly an administrative settlement, very different, for example, from the small elite central places identified by Loveluck and Tys around the North Sea at this time.⁴⁸

In other words, the Vrina Plain aristocratic *oikos* was probably not a response to the sack of Butrint, but instead an administered initiative to participate in an important trading zone, pivoted on Sicily, that for sixty or more years on a fairly low-level of bulk trade meshed together eastern Sicilian, southern Italian and western Balkan commercial interests. This new trading zone was unlikely to have been exceptional, at a time when Venice was attempting to establish itself as the primary force in the northern Adriatic Sea, and as the Aghlabids were venturing to manage coastal trade in North Africa. It belonged also to a time when there was a sharp rise in pilgrimage from Latin Christendom to the Holy Land,⁴⁹ and a concomitant traffic of pilgrims to the Peloponnesian shrines that led ultimately to St. Elias' presence at Butrint.⁵⁰ We speculate that it was also at this time that the shrine at Santa Quaranta above Saranda was restored,⁵¹ lending status possibly to the commander of the region in which it lay, namely the putative archon on the Vrina Plain. The hidden economic implications of this pilgrimage and the significance of Santa Quaranta must surely have raised the profile of Butrint and its imperial administrator at this time.

The final phase

The final phase of the Vrina Plain community is puzzling. It appears that the water table was steadily rising, making occupation of the plain difficult after

45 W. Bowden and R. Hodges, *Butrint 3. Excavations of the Triconch Palace*; Bowden and Hodges, 'Ice age settling on the Roman empire'; Hodges, *Byzantine Butrint*.

46 S. Gelichi, 'Flourishing places in north-eastern Italy: towns and emporia between late antiquity and the Carolingian age', in J. Henning (ed.), *Post-Roman towns, trade and settlement in Europe and Byzantium. Vol. 1. The heirs of the Roman West* (Berlin 2007) 77–104.

47 Gilkes et al., 'Onchesmos'.

48 C. Loveluck and D. Tys, 'Coastal societies, exchange and identity along the Channel and southern North Sea shores of Europe, AD 600–100', *Journal of Maritime Archaeology* 1 (2006) 148.

49 McCormick, *Origins*, 151–73.

50 J. Haldon, *The Palgrave atlas of Byzantine history* (London 2005) 90–5.

51 R. Hodges, *Saranda. Ancient Onchesmos. A short history and guide* (Tirana 2007) 45–7.

c. 1200.⁵² Colluvium created by increased agricultural activity on the hills around the plain may be one reason for these changing environmental conditions. Similar circumstances were also found to have been occurring around the lagoon at Glyki some 100 kilometres south of Butrint.⁵³ The administrative household almost certainly abandoned the plain for the walled town either shortly before or after AD 1000. Following this, much of the superstructure of the building appears to have collapsed and any usable material removed, presumably to be re-used in the construction of the new fortifications enclosing Butrint at this time.⁵⁴

Despite this robbing, there are indications that two kilns, one of which seems to have been a pottery kiln, were built in the apse of the earlier domus. The eastern end of the basilica also remained a focal point from the eleventh to twelfth century, with a devotional element centred on the still standing apse of the earlier building. Whether this functioned as a family church or a shrine used for periodic occasions could not be determined. The burials of three children, two neonates and one aged between 7–9 years old, were cut through the deposit infilling the bema.

The devotional use of the southern apse appears to have been short-lived. The reason is unclear, although the central step into the apse is severely fire cracked and a fire in this central space may once more have caused the abandonment of the area. Subsequently, the central feature in the apse was removed and an attempt appears to have been made to remove the stone slab flooring of the apse as well. This was followed soon after by the collapse of the apse wall. Fragments of a Brown and Green Painted ware bowl, dated to the second half of the twelfth century, found lying on the flagstones of the apse directly below the apse collapse, provides a *terminus post quem* for this occurrence.

Despoiling of the church's focal point within the apse also occurred at the nearby church at Diaporit on the shore of Lake Butrint, where the principal inhumations in its apse were removed.⁵⁵ Were these skeletal remains from local churches translated as relics to shrines inside Butrint as the port-town expanded as a centre during the era of the Epirote despots or were the Vrina Plain's relics translated to the adjacent hilltop, modern Shën Dëlli, where intriguingly a later medieval church dedicated to St. Elias exists to this day?

With the final abandonment, a 'black earth' deposit built up over the remains. This post abandonment deposit, varying in depth from between c. 0.35 m to 0.60 m, contained a mixed ceramic assemblage including early, mid and late Roman material, as well as ceramics covering the period from the ninth to thirteenth centuries. The coin

52 D. Bescoby, J. Barclay, and J. Andrews, 'Saints and sinners: a tephrochronology for Late Antique landscape change in Epirus from the eruptive history of Lipari, Aeolian islands', *Journal of Archaeological Science* 35(9) (2008) 2574–9.

53 T. Tartaron, *Bronze Age landscape and society in Southern Epirus, Greece* (Oxford 2004); J. Wiseman and K. Zachos, (eds), *Landscape archaeology in Southern Epirus, Greece* (Princeton 2003).

54 N. Molla, F. Paris, and F. Venturini, 'Material boundaries: The city walls at Butrint', in Hansen, Hodges and Leppard (eds), *Butrint* 4.

55 W. Bowden and L. Përzhita, 'Archaeology in the landscape of Roman Epirus: Preliminary report on the Diaporit excavations, 2002–3', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 17 (2004) 413–33.

finds also cover a similarly wide range. Among the latest coins are three of Manuel Komnenos I (1143–1180). A fragment of a silver plated horse bit, thought to date to the late eighth century, was also recovered from this layer. To the east of the excavation, c. 400 m away, a similar black earth deposit has been found in a recent excavation undertaken by the Albanian Heritage Foundation as part of their summer training school.⁵⁶ The finds from this include a bronze pectoral reliquary cross engraved with a figure of the Virgin Mary as Mother of God (Fig. 7). Amongst the medieval ceramics recovered from these layers has been a quantity of distinctive Byzantine sgraffito-ware sherds, tell-tale vessels of the later eleventh- to early thirteenth-century age, when Butrint formed strong commercial connections with the Peloponnese, rivalling and even eclipsing its older mercantile reach to southern Italy.⁵⁷ This rich assemblage suggests at least the presence of a church close by, or possibly a residence of some kind. Fewer such sherds occurred around the basilica within the old aristocratic *oikos*, suggesting that these prized tablewares belonged to a household probably engaged principally in fishing and, judging from the black earth, herding on the plain.

Even with much of the building covered over, there are signs that the ruins were still used periodically and remained a focus for the local community. To the west of the basilica the remains of a post-built structure were found cut through the black soils. Similar post-built structures characterized the community living beside the Vivari Channel in the Triconch Palace area at this time,⁵⁸ and it is perhaps worth noting that similar insubstantial buildings, normally with walls of reeds, clay and daub, and roofs of reeds, existed until the modern era, as Luigi Maria Ugolini observed in the inter-war period.⁵⁹ These modest buildings presumably served families which either practised fishing or otherwise worked the plain at this time. The graves of six of these individuals, datable to the twelfth to thirteenth century, were found in the excavations. These were simple graves: only one (3308) was stone-lined, as had been the norm in the previous centuries; the rest deployed re-used tiles. None of these inhumations was accompanied by grave goods. One of these individuals may have been responsible for picking up the large amount of rubble found partially overlying the levelled apse of the basilica.

From this time onwards, apart from a few Venetian stray finds, the site appears to have been largely deserted. This may have occurred as it appears that attempts at supporting an expanding town from the mid-eleventh century by agricultural intensification caused an ecological change to the surrounding environment and saw the emergence of swamp and wetlands along the edges of the plain.⁶⁰ As a result only shepherds and fishermen populated this increasingly marshy terrain until, with Chinese support in the 1960s, the landscape was drained by dykes to facilitate agricultural investment in root crops and wheat.

56 O. Gilkes and V. Hysa, 'In the shadow of Butrint', *Expedition* 53/3 (2011) 34–5.

57 Bowden and Hodges, 'Ice age settling on the Roman empire'; Hodges, *Byzantine Butrint*, 91.

58 Bowden and Hodges, 'Ice age settling on the Roman empire'.

59 Ugolini, *Butrinto*.

60 D. Bescoby et al., 'Saints and sinners: A tephrochronology for Late Antique landscape change in Epirus from the eruptive history of Lipari, Aeolian islands', *Journal of Archaeological Science* 35(9) (2008) 2574–9.



Figure 7 Frontal view of a small bronze pectoral reliquary cross of Byzantine type, engraved with the figure of the Virgin Mary as Mother of God, arms raised in a gesture of intercession (11th century) (Valbona Hysa).

Conclusion

In a recent essay, M. Veikou (2009) contends that a binary urban-rural settlement system did not exist in the seventh to twelfth centuries in Epiros. Such terms as ‘city’, ‘town’, ‘village’ and ‘countryside’ which have clear-cut contemporary meaning do not adequately describe Middle Byzantine historical settlements. Instead, there were settlement types ‘which combine qualities of more than one distinct type’.⁶¹ Veikou refers to these as ‘in-between settlements’, in many respects outside the present historical terminology for the regional settlement structure. Veikou’s concern is primarily with variants of villages as opposed to administrative centres and she admits that the archaeological evidence is almost non-existent to test her concept. Now, however, like the spectrum of rural settlement described by Veikou from the textual sources from this era (the ‘in-between settlements’), the newly-discovered Vrina Plain central-place does not strictly conform to any known historical form. It is neither urban nor rural, occupying the extra-mural ruins of an old established urban community.

61 M. Veikou, “‘Rural towns’ and “in-between” or “third” spaces. Settlement patterns in Byzantine Epirus (7th–11th centuries) from an interdisciplinary approach’, *Archeologia Medievale* 36 (2009) 43–54.

More to the point, this aristocratic *oikos* is different from those few places described in the texts of the era.⁶² So, the eleventh-century aristocrat, Philokales, converted his village into his private estate: ‘it is reasonable to suppose that the “fine house” at its simplest corresponded to the domanial residence – the “manor house”, which formed the nucleus of every *oikoproasteion*.’⁶³ Such an eleventh-century manor-house is described from western Turkey belonging to a certain Baris: ‘it consisted of a domed church, a domed cruciform hall (*triklinos*), with four chambers (*kouboukleia*) opening off it, and a bath-house (*loutron*). From one point of view, this was a very modest residence even by provincial standards.’⁶⁴ By the standards discovered on the Vrina Plain, which might well have comprised all these elements, Baris’ central-place was far from modest. Neither might compare with Constantine Doukas’ country house at Pentegostis near Serres, which had ‘quarters adequate for receiving the emperor’⁶⁵: this meant quarters for accommodating the imperial household, besides the combination of chapel, hall, chambers and bath-house for the residents and their esteemed guests. No emperor ever came or was probably anticipated at Butrint. Nevertheless, as the possible home of an *archon*, we might expect that there were amenities for housing guests, even suspect ones such as St. Elias in AD 881. Just how modest these really were on the far frontier of the Byzantine empire, even at a moment of sustained economic revival, is now evident from this discovery. The rhetoric of the texts merits re-examination in the light of this unexpected discovery. Urbanism in the ninth century was plainly in transition and central-places like this one on the Vrina Plain show how much there is still to learn about the many forms it might have taken.

Acknowledgements

The present paper reports the preliminary conclusions of the major excavations undertaken on the Vrina Plain, Butrint, Albania. The final publication of the complete archaeological sequence of the site is in preparation for publication in 2013. We are grateful to the Butrint Foundation in collaboration with the Packard Humanities Institute whose support made the excavations and subsequent research possible. Special thanks to Sarah Leppard, Inge Lyse Hansen, Riley Thorne, Peter Crawley and the rest of the international team of professional archaeologists and students who worked on the excavations during the searing Albanian summer. In writing this paper we are grateful to Will Bowden, Florin Curta, Todd Fenton, Oliver Gilkes, Valbona Hysa, Fotini Kondyli, John Mitchell, Pagona Papadopoulou, Paul Reynolds and Joanita Vroom whose original research is summarised here.

62 Magdalino, ‘The Byzantine aristocratic *oikos*’.

63 Ibid., 95.

64 Ibid., 95.

65 Ibid., 95.

The illusion of continuity: Nikephoros Phokas, John Tzimiskes and the eastern border

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Throughout the ninth and tenth centuries, the Byzantine Empire successfully expanded in the east. This culminated in the late tenth century with the great soldier emperors Nikephoros Phokas (963–969) and John Tzimiskes (969–976), who both achieved spectacular victories in the east at the expense of the empire's Arab enemies. Modern scholarship always links these emperors together as following a consistent strategy. This article argues that, despite similarities, Nikephoros and John actually had different approaches to the eastern wars, in geography, level of focus, operational style and ultimate objective, underpinned by different strategic visions of the Empire's position. This continuity is therefore illusory.

It is now common to suggest that the middle Byzantine military followed a consistent strategy on the eastern border. Modern scholarship has given us a rounded picture of the military machine of the ninth and tenth centuries, which was both determined and very effective. Initially resisting a far stronger enemy, the Byzantines systematically eliminated their Arab opponents throughout the period, city after city, and pushed the border further east. This process culminated with the great soldier emperors Nikephoros Phokas (963–969) and John Tzimiskes (969–976). Under Nikephoros, Cilicia and Antioch were conquered and the feared Hamdanid state of Aleppo was reduced to a client. John raided Damascus, conquered the cities of the Syrian coast and extended Byzantine supremacy in Armenia. John's successor, Basil II, although he campaigned in the east, was mostly concerned with the empire's western border and no later emperor ever dominated the region as Nikephoros and John did. Historiographically, they are always considered together. In his key account of the evolution of the Byzantine military, James Howard-Johnston argues that these two emperors' wars 'were different in character from those of the preceding third phase ... bolder, wider ranging, more spectacular, more orthodox campaigns'.¹ In the recent translation of Leo the Deacon's *History*, its authors argue that 'in the east Tzimiskes continued Nikephoros Phokas' offensive, attacking the emirate

1 J. D. Howard-Johnston, *Studies in the organisation of the Byzantine army in the tenth and eleventh centuries* (DPhil thesis, Oxford 1971) 246.

of Mosul and even invading Fatimid territory... his eventual aim may have been to reach Jerusalem itself and restore it to Christian hands'.² Even Marius Canard, writing from the Islamic perspective, presents Tzimiskēs as performing in Mesopotamia what Nikephoros did in Syria, pointing to an attempt to subordinate Mosul as a key objective of John's eastern strategy.³ In reality, although the two men were similar, their backgrounds may have blinded us to real differences. Recent scholarship has begun to note this point. In his most recent publication on the subject, Howard-Johnston hints at a revision of his 1971 position, pointing to a decisive change in foreign policy in 968 and 969, that is, around the accession of John, not in 963 or 976. He ascribes this to a change in the geopolitical situation at that time.⁴ This article goes further, and argues that despite some similarities, Nikephoros and John had very different strategic approaches to the eastern wars. To highlight these, I will first sketch out the narrative of their eastern campaigns, largely neglected in modern accounts,⁵ then assess the main differences between the two and finally consider their underlying strategic visions of the empire, which do not bear out perceptions of continuity.

I

Any account of the careers of the soldier emperors must begin well before Nikephoros' accession in 963. He dictated strategy for the eastern command from 955, when he was made domestic of the scholai.⁶ As domestic, he appears to have had a relatively free hand; there is certainly no evidence to suggest a material breach between him and

2 Leo the Deacon, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, trans. A-M. Talbot and D. F. Sullivan (Washington D.C. 2005) 3.

3 M. Canard, 'La date des expéditions mésopotamiennes de Jean Tzimiskès', *Mélanges Henri Grégoire II. Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* 10 (Brussels 1950) 99, and repeated in M. Canard, *Histoire de la dynastie des H'amdanides de Jazîra et de Syrie* (Algiers 1953) 838, hereafter Canard, *Histoire*.

4 J. D. Howard-Johnston, 'Byzantium and its neighbours', in E. Jeffreys et al (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford 2008) 951.

5 The only full-length narrative account of the eastern campaigns is G. Schlumberger, *Un empereur byzantin au dixième siècle: Nicéphore Phocas* (Paris 1890), and idem. *L'épopée byzantin à la fin du dixième siècle* (Paris 1896). The early years of Nikephoros' campaigns are analysed in detail in W. L. Garrood, 'The Byzantine conquest of Cilicia and the Hamdanids of Aleppo, 959-965', *Anatolian Studies* 58 (2008) 127-40. The main Greek sources for this period are Leonis Diaconi, *Historia*, ed. C. B. Hase (Bonn 1828), hereafter Leo the Deacon; Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis Historiarum*, ed. H. Thurn, CFHB 5 (Berlin 1973), hereafter Skylitzes. Both the main Arabic sources are available in translation: Yahya Ibn Sa'id, *Chronicle*, ed. and trans. A. A. Vasiliev, *Patrologia Orientalis*, XVIII (Paris 1924) and XXIII (Paris 1932), hereafter Yahya; Miskawayh, *The experiences of the nations*, ed. and trans. D. S. Margoliouth and H. F. Amedroz, *The eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate: original chronicles of the Fourth Islamic Century*, V (Oxford 1921), hereafter Miskawayh. Other Arabic sources are summarized in Canard, *Histoire*, and J. B. Bikhazi, *The Hamdanid dynasty of Mesopotamia and North Syria 868 - 1014* (PhD thesis, University of Michigan 1981), hereafter Bikhazi.

6 Canard, *Histoire*, 786 ; Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes*, II.1. *La Dynastie Macedonienne (867-959)*, ed. M. Canard (Brussels 1968) 355, hereafter Vasiliev-Canard, *Byzance et les Arabes*, II.1.

Constantinople at any point before 963. Through the late 950s, he consolidated the Byzantine advance in the mountains of the Taurus and anti-Taurus: Byzantine armies conquered Hadat in 957 and Samosata in 958.⁷ In this area, Nikephoros was building on the successes of earlier generals, stretching back through the tenth century: John Kourkouas had reduced many cities during his tenure as domestic in the second quarter of the century, most notably Melitene in 934; Theodosiopolis fell in 949 after a number of abortive prior attempts.⁸ With his conquests, Nikephoros brought the Byzantine armies to the edge of the Syrian plain, and promptly left the east in 959 (or possibly 958) to invade Crete. In 960 and 961, the first years of Romanos II's reign, Nikephoros was in Crete itself. Perhaps unexpectedly, the campaign was an astounding success. Previous attempts to take Crete had ended in ignominious failure. This attempt did not; Crete stayed in Byzantine hands until 1204.⁹

Nikephoros left Crete in 961 and returned almost immediately to the eastern frontier. In his absence, a Byzantine force under his brother Leo had inflicted a major defeat on Sayf ad-Dawla at Adrassos, in south-central Asia Minor, severely weakening Hamdanid power.¹⁰ On his return, Nikephoros embarked on a sustained period of pressure against the cities of Cilicia and the power of the Hamdanids in Syria, pausing only to seize the throne in 963. In the winter of 961, Nikephoros defeated a series of Cilician armies and then destroyed Anazarba, although he does not appear to have occupied it. In the process, he broke the Hamdanid–Cilician alliance, already strained by divergent tactics in the 960 raid.¹¹ The following year, now exclusively focused on Aleppo, he devastated northern Syria, raiding Duluk, Raban and Maras, thus opening up the road to the heart of the Hamdanid emirate. That Christmas, he launched a surprise raid on Aleppo, the pre-eminent remaining Arab border state, sacked the city and destroyed the power of Sayf ad-Dawla. The significance of the sacking of Aleppo is disputed by Arabists, but it was in reality a body blow to the emirate: the Hamdanids were never able to threaten the Byzantines again.¹² More importantly, the sacking left the cities of Cilicia undefended. Although there was a brief pause in campaigning for part of 963 when Nikephoros and the army were absent, securing his throne in Constantinople, there was little interruption. Between 963 and 965, Byzantine armies, led in person by Nikephoros in 964 and 965, returned again and again to Cilicia, destroying the power of each of the major cities of the plain in turn. He constantly besieged them, devastated their territories, and cut off their routes of escape and support. Byzantine troops are attested as being

7 Canard, *Histoire*, 79; Vasiliev-Canard, *Byzance et les Arabes* II, 1, 319, 361–3.

8 M. Whittow, *The making of Orthodox Byzantium* (London 1996) 322.

9 Leo the Deacon 6–16, 24–8; Skylitzes 245–6, 249–50; Yahya, PO XVIII 782; Vasiliev-Canard, *Byzance et les Arabes*, II, 1, 332–41 (for the earlier expedition to Crete).

10 Leo the Deacon, 19–22; Skylitzes 250; Yahya PO XVIII, 781–3; Miskawayh 195–6; Canard, *Histoire*, 801; Bikhazi, 847.

11 Yahya, PO XVIII 784; Miskawayh 208; Canard, *Histoire*, 806–7; Bikhazi 847, 853–5.

12 Skylitzes 252–3; Yahya, PO XVIII 784–7; Miskawayh 208–11; Canard, *Histoire*, 808–16; Bikhazi 856–66; Garrood, 'The Byzantine conquest of Cilicia and the Hamdanids of Aleppo', 133–4.

beneath the walls of Tarsos for three years in succession.¹³ In 965, he finally conquered Tarsos and Mopsuestia and with them Arab Cilicia, the centre of numerous raids into the Empire – the latest by Sayf ad-Dawla himself in 960.¹⁴

After the conquest of Cilicia, Nikephoros turned his attention to northern Syria. Immediately after the conquest of Tarsos, Nikephoros attacked Manbij, although inconclusively; Manbij was to be attacked a number of times over the next few years. During the winter, Antioch rebelled against Sayf ad-Dawla and placed itself under the protection of the Byzantines, with the ex-Tarsan leader Rashiqa an-Naisimi in charge;¹⁵ Nikephoros agreed to a prisoner exchange with Sayf ad-Dawla at the same time.¹⁶ Antioch's rebellion was short lived, and Sayf ad-Dawla soon re-established control. Nikephoros would not tolerate this and in the autumn of 966, he attacked the Hamdanids once more. This raid was relatively limited, although determining the exact route is complex, as both Leo and Skylitzes conflate the raid with that of 968. He besieged Manbij on 6 or 7 October, where he retrieved the holy tile relic from the city (not from Edessa, as stated in Leo the Deacon). He then arrived at Antioch on 23 October, which he besieged for seven days before running out of food – a common problem in this period, at least in part due to Byzantine devastation of the country. Leo the Deacon's account of Nikephoros reaching Tripoli must be placed in 968, as the distance from Antioch to Tripoli is 115km, and from Manbij slightly more. To reach Tripoli and return in 14 days, including some time spent before the walls of Manbij, is implausible given that marching rates were only c. 20km per day. Likewise, the raid on Manbij must be dated to 966, as the translation of the holy tile to Constantinople took place in 967. The 966 raid thus clearly cut across the Aleppine emirate heading for Antioch.¹⁷

Nikephoros was briefly engaged in the west in 967-968, but there was little danger from the Hamdanids. In 967, Sayf ad-Dawla died, leaving a weak and divided emirate.¹⁸ There was a Khurasani (not Hamdanid) led assault from Antioch during the winter of 967-8, but it was ably blocked by Peter the Stratopedarch.¹⁹ In the north-east, Byzantine power expanded further into Armenia with the acquisition of Taron. In October 968, Nikephoros returned to the east, in an even stronger strategic position than the one he had left. In October, he once again cut through the Aleppine emirate in the east, via Diyar Misr and Mayyafariqin, and besieged Antioch on 22 October. The siege lasted

13 Miskawayh, 216–17, 222–6; Canard, *Histoire*, 818–23; Bikhazi 893–7, 920–1; Garrood, 'The Byzantine conquest of Cilicia and the Hamdanids of Aleppo', 135–8.

14 Yahya, PO XVIII 796; Bikhazi 931–5; Vasiliev-Canard, *Byzance et les Arabes II*, 1, 238.

15 Yahya, PO XVIII 797–8; Canard, *Histoire*, 651; Bikhazi 922–32; Miskawayh 226–7.

16 Yahya, PO XVIII 803; Miskawayh 233–4; Canard, *Histoire*, 823–4.

17 Leo the Deacon 70–2; Skylitzes 270–1; Yahya, PO XVIII 805–6; Miskawayh 228; Canard 825; Bikhazi 931–5; E. McGeer, *Sowing the Dragon's Teeth* (Washington D.C. 1996) 338–41; F. Halkin, 'Translation par Nicéphore Phocas de la brique miraculeuse d'Hiérapolis (BHG 3 801n)', *Inédits byzantins d'Ochrida, Candie et Moscou, Subsidia hagiographica* 38 (Brussels 1963) 253–60.

18 Yahya, PO XVIII 807; Canard, *Histoire*, 826; Bikhazi 935.

19 Leo the Deacon 62–3, 77–81; Skylitzes 276–8; Yahya, PO XVIII 807, 813–4; Canard, *Histoire*, 831.

for only two days, presumably because of a shortage of food, and this time Nikephoros continued down the coast, conquering Laodicea, attacking Tripoli on 5 November, and thereafter besieging Arqah for eight days. He returned to Constantinople in December, after a solar eclipse on 22 December when he was still in the field.²⁰ He left armies in Baghras under Michael Bourtzes, with instructions to attack Antioch daily, and another force in Cilicia under Peter.²¹

In 969, Antioch was finally conquered, although the circumstances are unclear. Nikephoros seems to have prepared for the conquest. He bought off the Fatimids, sending them a relic of the prophet, which may also have been part of a ransom of prisoners – after all, the Fatimids were concentrating on Cairo.²² However, he was not present at the fall of Antioch, which seems to have occurred contrary to his orders. The Greek sources record a clandestine entry by Bourtzes on 28 October, aided by Peter, who was summoned from Cilicia after Bourtzes had begun the attack. When the news reached Constantinople, Michael was recalled by Nikephoros and dismissed.²³ There is no suggestion that Nikephoros disapproved of the conquest *per se*, since he kept Byzantine forces led by Peter in the east, despite pleas from the Bulgars to defend them from Russian aggression; however, Michael Bourtzes had clearly overstepped his authority. In December, Peter moved against Aleppo, subjecting it to a siege of 27 days, according to Yahya.²⁴ It is surprising that it lasted so long. Now almost completely bereft of authority after the civil war between Qargawayh, Sayf ad-Dawla's key lieutenant, and Abu Firas and Abu al-Ma'ali, Aleppo fell in late December or early January 970.²⁵ Afterwards, a treaty was signed bringing Aleppo into the Byzantine orbit, ceding large tracts of territory to the Byzantines, and recognising Qargawayh as its ruler, although with a substantially constrained freedom of movement.²⁶ Almost at the same time, Manzikert was conquered.²⁷ By this time, however, Nikephoros was dead, assassinated in Constantinople on 11 December by Tzimiskes.²⁸

II

Nikephoros' murderer came from a similar background, and had enjoyed a similarly gilded military career. Related to Nikephoros by marriage, John held a series of major commands in the east: *strategos* of Mesopotamia under Constantine VII, of the

20 Leo the Deacon 70–3; Yahya, PO XVIII, 814–16; Canard, *Histoire*, 831; Th. Bianquis, *Damas et la Syrie sous la domination Fatimide 359-468/969-1076* (Damascus 1986) 38–9.

21 Leo the Deacon 74; Skylitzes 271–2.

22 Leo the Deacon 76.

23 Leo the Deacon 81–2; Skylitzes 272–3; Yahya, PO XVIII 816, 822–3; Canard, *Histoire*, 822; C. Holmes, *Basil II and the governance of empire 976-1025* (Oxford 2006) 332.

24 Yahya 823.

25 Yahya 824; Canard, *Histoire*, 667–74, 832; Bikhazi 948–52.

26 Canard, *Histoire*, 833; Bikhazi 952–3.

27 Yahya 825–6.

28 Leo the Deacon 85–9; Skylitzes 279–81; Yahya, PO XVIII 824, 827–31.

Anatolikon under Romanos II, and domestic of the *scholai* in the east on Nikephoros' accession.²⁹ Thus, before his accession, he had spent a substantial period of time on the eastern border, playing a major role in Nikephoros' campaigns. Initially he appears to have been concerned with the easternmost provinces. In 956 and again in 958, Tzimiskes invaded the Diyar Bakr, conquering Samosata on the latter occasion.³⁰ In 959, he raided eastern Syria, possibly reaching as far as Edessa.³¹ He also served in the western Syrian theatre of military operations. In 961 and 962, Tzimiskes was with the main army in Cilicia and Aleppo, and played a major part in the conquest of Aleppo. In 963, he was a key member of the group that supported Nikephoros' seizure of the throne.³² From 963 to 965, he was in the vanguard of the campaigns in Cilicia, against Adana in 963, Mopsuestia in 964 and 965, and Tarsos.³³ It is less clear what Tzimiskes' movements in the later part of the 960s were, as he was not present for the attack on Antioch, and was described by Leo the Deacon as 'wallowing in the mire of pleasure' in 969, having been removed from his position as domestic.³⁴ It is his dismissal from office that almost certainly led to the deposition of Nikephoros.

Having murdered his predecessor, John spent the next two years much closer to home. Skylitzes attests that the Cilician and Syrian provinces rebelled in the first year of his reign. Although it is not clear how serious this unrest was, it evidently did not need the imperial presence.³⁵ Later in the same year, Bardas Skleros was sent to the east to put down the rebellion of Bardas Phokas, Nikephoros' nephew, at Caesarea.³⁶ The eastern border was far from quiet during these months, but appears to have been primarily organized along defensive lines. Fresh from their conquest of Egypt, the Fatimids invaded northern Syria in winter 970–971, and sought to take Antioch. They besieged it for up to five months, but were repulsed by the patriarch Nicholas, and Fatimid authority then collapsed in northern Syria as they clashed with the Qarmita.³⁷ In the west, John concentrated on the Russian threat. Bardas Skleros led the armies in 970, and, in 971, John himself campaigned at length in the Balkans. He fought against the Rus throughout

29 Leo the Deacon 44, 49, 99; Skylitzes 267; Yahya, PO XVIII 790; J.-C. Cheynet, 'Le Phocas', in G. Dagron and H. Mihaescu (eds), *Le traité sur la guerre de l'empereur Nicéphore Phocas* (Paris 1986) 310–15 and family tree; J.-C. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance 963–1210* (Paris 1990) 268–70.

30 Canard, *Histoire*, 795; Vasiliev-Canard, *Byzance et les Arabes*, II. 1, 356, 363.

31 Yahya, PO XVIII 775; Canard, *Histoire*, 798–9; Bikhazi 893–4.

32 Leo the Deacon 38–40; Skylitzes 256.

33 Leo the Deacon 50–4, 59–61; Skylitzes 267–70; Yahya, PO XVIII 793–7; Miskawayh 217, 222–5 (in Miskawayh's account Tzimiskes is not named specifically and although he refers to the 'domestic', it is likely he means the emperor, not John.); Canard, *Histoire*, 818–21; Bikhazi 893–9.

34 Leo the Deacon 84.

35 Skylitzes 286.

36 Leo the Deacon 112–26; Skylitzes 292–3; Yahya, PO XVIII 831–2.

37 Leo the Deacon 103; Skylitzes 287; Yahya, PO XXIII 350–1; P. E. Walker, 'A Byzantine victory over the Fatimids at Alexandretta (971)', *B* 42 (1972) 431–40; Bianquis, 'La prise du pouvoir par les Fatimides en Egypte (357–363/968–974)', *Annales Islamologiques* 11 (1972) 83–4; idem, *Damas et la Syrie sous la domination Fatimide 359–468/969–1076*, 39–51.

the summer, winning major victories at Preslav and making a famous successful siege of Dorostolon.³⁸ Simultaneously, there was another rebellion of the Phokades, Leo and his other son Nikephoros, but this was suppressed swiftly in Constantinople.³⁹ In the winter, Byzantine troops returned, having extracted a treaty from the Rus. On his return, Tzimiskes awarded himself a triumph, presumably to strengthen his internal position.⁴⁰

As a result, it was not until the summer of 972, over two years after his accession, that Tzimiskes first headed east as emperor. He then led campaigns in eastern Syria in 972 and 974, and in western Syria in 975. The dating of these expeditions has been much discussed, although Canard's 1950 reconstruction is definitive.⁴¹ In his first eastern campaign as emperor in 972, John left Melitene in late September, marched through Diyar Rabia and sacked Nisibis on 12 October, imposing an annual tribute on the Hamdanids of Mosul. Thereafter, he turned on the remainder of the 'Aleppine' emirate at Mayyafariqin, but with little success.⁴² This was the first in what seems to have been intended to be a series of operations on the eastern border. John left the army wintering at Anzitene under the command of the domestic Melias.⁴³ Although there was an incursion by the Hamdanids of Mosul against Taron in the winter, Melias and the army were back in action in the spring of 973 in the same theatre, moving against Mayyafariqin and besieging Amida. This campaign ended disastrously when Melias was defeated before the walls in June, a defeat which presumably explains the silence in the Greek sources. Melias was held in captivity for some time, dying in March 974 before an exchange could be arranged.⁴⁴

John reappeared in the same region in the summer of 974, where he appears to have led a campaign that restored Byzantine arms. He attacked Edessa and then Amida, although details are patchy. Leo claims that John led the army further east to Ekbatana (possibly Baghdad) and the Persian desert, but this is implausible.⁴⁵ Matthew of Edessa records 300 forts falling to the Byzantines, but it is likely gains were much more modest.⁴⁶ It seems clear that, although sizeable, this raid was aimed at revenging the

38 Leo the Deacon 128–45, 148–58; Skylitzes 295–308; Yahya, PO XXIII 350; S. McGrath, 'The battle of Dorostolon (971): rhetoric and reality', in T.S. Miller and J. Nesbitt (eds), *Peace and war: essays in honour of G. T. Dennis* (Washington, D. C. 1995) 152–64.

39 Leo the Deacon 145–7; Skylitzes 303.

40 Leo the Deacon 158–9; Skylitzes 309–10; Canard, *Histoire*, 841.

41 Canard, 'La date des expéditions mésopotamiennes de Jean Tzimiskès', 99–108.

42 Yahya, PO XXIII 353; Miskawayh 326; Canard, *Histoire*, 841.

43 Yahya 353. For the identification of Bathn–Hanzith as Anzitene see Holmes, *Basil II*, 326.

44 Yahya, PO XXIII 354; Miskawayh 335–6; Canard, *Histoire*, 842.

45 Leo the Deacon 162; trans. 204 n. 13 and 14.

46 Leo the Deacon 161–2; Yahya, PO XXIII 353; Canard, *Histoire*, 842–3; Matthew of Edessa, *Zhamanakagrut' iwn* (*Chronographia*), ed. and trans. A. Dosturian, *Armenia and the crusades, tenth to twelfth centuries* (New York 1993) 28; Canard, 'La date des expéditions mésopotamiennes de Jean Tzimiskès', 107; C. Holmes, 'Byzantium's eastern frontier in the tenth and eleventh centuries', in D. Abulafia and N. Berend (eds), *Medieval Frontiers: concepts and practices* (Aldershot 2002) 100–1; M. Canard, 'Deux

defeat of Melias and strengthening the authority of the Byzantines in the east after their defeat the previous year.⁴⁷

It certainly did not result in a continued interest in Mesopotamia. After three years of Byzantine campaigning there, John switched the focus of his assault in 975, striking into Syria. This raid was launched in April, capturing Manbij (for at least the second time) and Apamea, and imposing tribute on Damascus, where the Turk Alptekin was recognized as governor under short-lived Byzantine authority. All this was accomplished quickly and Tzimiskes then moved west to the coast, capturing Baalbek on 29 May, then Beirut, Sidon and Byblos, before unsuccessfully besieging Tripoli. Upon his return, he captured a string of towns on the northern Syrian coast.⁴⁸ The raid appears to have been a sustained attempt to change the political make-up of the western Syrian border, imposing Tzimiskes' authority on the provinces within and outside the empire. Within Byzantine lands, John promoted Kouleb in Antioch,⁴⁹ and a number of new tributary relationships with Islamic cities were formalized outside it. Ambassadors were sent to Cairo, and although their role is unclear, it is likely that they were seeking to emphasize this new Byzantine hegemony.⁵⁰ The long term intentions of this strategy will never be known. It was the last of John's campaigns – he died that winter, on 11 January 976.⁵¹

Immediately after John's death, the Byzantine army in the east, led by Michael Bourtzes, launched a second invasion of Syria, raiding Tripoli and planning another expedition.⁵² However, the empire quickly dissolved into civil war with the long running double revolts of Bardas Skleros and Bardas Phokas. Later, when Basil II re-asserted imperial control, his interests lay elsewhere. Although he did campaign in the east, he concentrated primarily on his campaigns in the west and the successful incorporation of various Armenian principalities: Tao in 1000 and Vaspurakan in 1020. Syria

Continued

documents arabes sur Bardas Skleros', *Extrait des actes du Ve congrès d'études byzantines. Studi Bizantini e Neoellenini*, V (Rome 1939) 61–2.

47 Matthew of Edessa, *Zhamanakagrat' iun* (*Chronographia*), ed. and trans. A. Dosturian, 27; W. Farag, *Byzantium and its Muslim neighbours during the reign of Basil II (976-1025)* (PhD thesis, University of Birmingham 1979) 40.

48 Leo the Deacon 165–8; Yahya, PO XXIII 368–9; Canard, *Histoire*, 843–4; P.E. Walker, 'The "crusade" of John Tzimiskes in the light of new Arabic evidence', *B* 47 (1977) 301–27; Vasiliev, *Byzance et les Arabes III: Die Ostgrenze des Byzantinschen Reiches von 363 bis 1071* ed. E. Honigmann (Brussels 1935) 99–102.

49 Yahya, PO XXIII 369; Canard, *Histoire*, 844; Holmes, *Basil II*, 333–8; V. Laurent, 'La chronologie des gouverneurs d'Antioche sous la seconde domination byzantine', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth* 38 (1962) 223.

50 Walker, 'The "crusade" of John Tzimiskes in the light of new Arabic evidence', 324–6; al-Rudhrawari, *The experiences of the nations*, ed. and trans. D. S. Margoliouth and H. F. Amedroz, *The eclipse of the Abbasid caliphate*, VI, 5–6.

51 Leo the Deacon 177; Skylitzes 311.

52 Yahya, PO XXIII 372; Canard, *Histoire*, 849.

was largely ignored.⁵³ The Fatimid threat loomed over the northern Syrian territories, and led to a number of clashes in the 980s and 990s, but the border remained relatively stable, with Aleppo playing an important role as a buffer between the Byzantine and Fatimid empires.⁵⁴ The Byzantine focus had shifted to the west; the eastern theatre had become an area to negotiate over, not to fight for. Basil even offered to cede Aleppo to the Buyids in return for Bardas Skleros.⁵⁵

III

Such an offer would have been unacceptable to both soldier emperors. However, this does not mean they would have approached the issue in the same manner. Analysis of their campaigns suggests that they had different approaches to geography, focus, operation and ultimate objective.

Geographically, the contrast is easily visible on any map. Nikephoros was in command for a much longer period than Tzimiskes, but his campaigns can be plotted much more closely than those of his successor. Almost all his activity occurred within a small area on the south-eastern border, comprising Cilicia and western Syria. With the exceptions of brief defensive campaigns in the Balkans, and the operations against Crete, Nikephoros was rarely absent from that area in his long years of command. By contrast, John was active in multiple theatres of war more or less equally. Before his accession, he seems to have concentrated on the north-east around Mayyafariqin. This mirrored an earlier division of responsibility when John Kourkuas gave control of the north-east to John's grandfather Theophilos (Kourkuas' brother), while an earlier Phokas was given the south-east.⁵⁶ As emperor, in a mere five years, he campaigned in the Balkans against the Rus, well beyond the Byzantine borders, in the north-east against Nisibis and Edessa, and in the south-east in Beirut. Despite Canard's assertion of a north-eastern focus, John only spent two years campaigning against the Mosul emirate. He saw action on all of the empire's borders with the exception of Sicily.

Sicily itself was never a priority for tenth century emperors. However, it was even less likely that John would campaign there than his predecessor. During Nikephoros' command, there were a series of important Byzantine naval victories: outside Tarsos (956), Crete (960–961), Sicily (964) and the often overlooked, but significant, conquest of Cyprus (965).⁵⁷ Under John, there was no comparable activity, although he took steps to maintain Byzantine naval supremacy. For example, his 971 treaty with the Venetians

53 Holmes, *Basil II*, 306–13; Whittow, *The making of Orthodox Byzantium*, 382–6; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance*; Howard-Johnston, 'Byzantium and its neighbours', 951.

54 Canard, *Histoire*, 850–1, 856–957; Farag, *Byzantium and its Muslim neighbours during the reign of Basil II*, 188–204; idem., 'The Aleppo question', *BMGS* 14 (1990).

55 Holmes, *Basil II*, 245.

56 Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance*, 216, 322.

57 See above, but also on the defeat of the Arab fleet outside Tarsos, see Vasiliev-Canard, *Byzance et les Arabes*, II. 1, 360; on Sicily, Leo the Deacon 66–7; on Cyprus, A. I. Dikigoropolos, *Cyprus betwixt Greeks and Saracens' AD 647–965* (DPhil thesis Oxford 1961).

sought to prevent Arab acquisition of timber, and he certainly used naval support for his land campaigns, for example in Bulgaria.⁵⁸ Control of the sea was critical to the Byzantine war effort, allowing them to block any relief efforts in Cilicia and Syria, and to supply and support their own troops. Arabists are aware of the significance of control of the sea, and acutely conscious of 'Syria's exposed sea flank', but Byzantinists have been reluctant to recognize both the complexity of the naval challenge and the importance of Byzantine power in the eastern Mediterranean in the period.⁵⁹ Nikephoros' reasons for this focus seem straightforward—he needed command of the sea to secure his objectives. He was always focussed on the same sequence of linked objectives: the subjugation of the plateau (955–959), the conquest of Cilicia (961–965) and then Antioch (966–969). When he moved away from his main theatre of war, it was almost always with these long term objectives in mind. This explains his willingness to support naval engagements and, indeed, much of his strategy. The apparent vacillation between Aleppo and Cilicia in the early 960s was nothing of the sort: Cilicia was always the objective.⁶⁰ Outside these objectives, Nikephoros was content to leave other fronts vulnerable. In 963, Naja was able to raid deep into Byzantine territory and attack Melitene without direct reprisals, as the army was directed at Cilicia.⁶¹ In 969, the Bulgarians were left largely to their own devices, despite vociferous supplications, while Nikephoros sent Peter to conquer Aleppo, thus allowing the Rus to become masters of Bulgaria.⁶² John displayed none of this single-mindedness: during his reign he changed the direction of the main army many times. In 970 alone, for example, his generals suppressed a rebellion in central Asia Minor, fought the Rus, and defended the empire from the Fatimids. John himself often campaigned in different theatres from year to year. Often his campaigns seem to have been reactive. For example, his campaign against Amida in 974 is likely to have been a direct result of the defeat of Melias the year before. However, although John never wished to leave the enemy having the upper hand in a theatre of war, he could also react opportunistically to the external situation, as in Syria in 975.

Part of this flexibility stemmed from a very different operational model under John – he made much greater use of his subordinates than Nikephoros ever did. Although John frequently led campaigns in person, so did his main generals. As a result, one can only assume that the armies in question were smaller. This may explain the defeat of Melias at Amida in 973, although John's armies were very often successful. In contrast, Nikephoros was present for most of the major offensive victories of his regime. The most notable exception was the fall of Antioch in 969. Even there, Nikephoros had intended

58 G.L.F. Tafel, G. M. Thomas, *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig* (Vienna 1856) I, no. 14; D. M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice* (Cambridge 1988) 37; Leo the Deacon 81.

59 Bikhazi 822; R. Morris, 'The two faces of Nikephoros Phokas', *BMGS* 12 (1988) 90; Y. Lev, 'The Fatimid navy, Byzantium and the Mediterranean 909-1036 C.E./ 297 – 427 A.H.', *B* 54 (1984) 236–8, 240–4; Farag, *Byzantium and its Muslim neighbours during the reign of Basil II*, 42.

60 Garrood, 'The Byzantine conquest of Cilicia and the Hamdanids of Aleppo', 138.

61 Miskawayh 213–14; Bikhazi 878–9.

62 Leo the Deacon 81; Yahya, PO XVIII 826.

to be present for the conquest and he left specific instructions for Bourtzes only to raid the city daily, but not to take it. Once Bourtzes did so, he was dismissed. Contemporary sources were confused by this, with all manner of odd explanations given. Skylitzes' account of a prophecy is no more convincing than Yahya's assertion that Nikephoros was saddened by the damage caused.⁶³ Instead, it is clear that Nikephoros jealously guarded his position, removing successful generals and limiting their involvement in prestigious victories, while he personally commanded the army for its greatest conquests. In 965, after taking part in the conquest of Tarsos with Nikephoros, John was in a position to attack Mayyafariqin. However, Nikephoros is reported to have ordered him not to do so, but to wait until they had met in Constantinople.⁶⁴ Of course, John was also later dismissed. There were few generals who were allowed prominence under Nikephoros outside his immediate family, his brother Leo and cousin Eustathios Maleinos, and the eunuch Peter the Stratopedarch.⁶⁵ He did not entirely trust even his family: Leo was promoted out of the army. By contrast, John worked well with his generals, as well as his co-conspirator Bourtzes. He vested extensive authority in Bardas Skleros and Melias, and was even able to bring senior men into his service across the cultural divide: for example, Ibn Al-Zayyat fought with John in 975. However, John did not allow entrenched power to build up indiscriminately. He imposed rapid changes of personnel in Antioch, very quickly dismissing Maleinos, who supported Phokas, from his position as *strategos* of Antioch in 970.⁶⁶ Elsewhere, he ensured that he personally eclipsed Skleros' successful campaign against the Rus in 970–1. However, in general, he seems to have managed a fractious set of military magnates well. None of these ambitious men was able to launch a coup against John in the way he and Bourtzes had acted against Nikephoros. Even though there are suggestions that Skleros was dismissed for plotting against John, he was soon brought back into imperial service.⁶⁷ This success is all the more surprising considering the relative strength of Nikephoros' position in 963 compared to that of John in 969. Nikephoros could rely on a united and loyal army, while John was faced with a hostile ecclesiastical establishment and an army where the Phokades continued to command considerable loyalty, shown in their successive rebellions in the first two years of his reign.⁶⁸ However, John did establish an unsailable position, vulnerable neither to the revenge of the Phokades nor to other

63 Skylitzes 272; Yahya, PO XVIII 825.

64 Miskawayh 226.

65 For Eustathios' relation to Nikephoros, see Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance* (family tree). Note that Peter, ever loyal to the central government, later served Basil with distinction as well. Yahya, PO XXIII 374.

66 W. B. R. Saunders, 'The Aachen reliquary of Eustathios Maleinos 969–970', *DOP* 36 (1983) 211–19.

67 Skylitzes 314. Basil seems to have learned from Nikephoros' fate. Other than Nikephoros Ouranos, no domestic of the scholai of the east was appointed during Basil's reign: Cheynet, 'Basil II and Asia Minor', in P. Magdalino (ed.), *Byzantium in the Year 1000* (Leiden 2003) 87.

68 Leo the Deacon 95, 99; R. Morris, 'Succession and usurpation: politics and rhetoric in the late tenth century', in P. Magdalino (ed.), *New Constantines* (Aldershot 1994) 202.

magnates. He did not associate the sons of Romanos II with him on his coinage, and by 972 was able to march through Phokas lands to get to the eastern border.⁶⁹ This can only have been made possible by the highly skilful management of difficult and powerful men that Nikephoros failed so badly to do.

A fourth distinction could be added to these three, although here the evidence is less clear-cut. All Nikephoros' campaigns were wars of conquest, even if some needed a number of years to come to fruition. Once major cities were conquered, they were made Byzantine by bringing Christian populations into the region from adjacent areas, notably in Tarsos.⁷⁰ The treaty with Aleppo in 970 should not be seen as signalling an end to this process. Treaties and agreements with the Arabs cannot really be seen to be definitive, and contemporary sources were in no doubt that Nikephoros would conquer all Syria.⁷¹ Certainly, in the case of Aleppo, the treaty of 969 contained provision for the Byzantines to nominate an heir, who could easily have been Greek; and we should not read into 970 the later role of Aleppo as a buffer between the then newly arrived Fatimids and the Byzantines.⁷² John likewise enlarged the empire, but his legacy was less solid. He may have added a number of minor fortresses in the east in 972 and 974, ones that Skleros was prepared to relinquish a decade later, but it is unclear whether these were conquered in that campaign or earlier.⁷³ Furthermore, he certainly added a number of towns on the Mediterranean coast in his last campaign, although many were held in a tributary relationship.⁷⁴ However, his great campaigns were as much about projecting power (or its illusion) than conquest, something that can easily be seen in the letter to Ashot III in which John boasts of his prowess.⁷⁵ If so, they seem to have worked - Ibn Miskawayh reports that the citizens of Baghdad rioted as they thought he would turn on them next.⁷⁶

69 Morris, 'Succession and usurpation', 207; P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine coins in the Dumbarton Oaks collection and in the Whittemore collection*, III/2 (Washington, D.C. 1973) 580, 589; Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance*, 213; idem, 'Le Phocas' in G. Dagron and H. Mihaescu, *Le traité sur la guerre de l'empereur Nicéphore Phocas*.

70 Yahya, PO XVIII 797; Miskawayh 225–6; G. Dagron, 'Minorités ethniques et religieuses dans l'orient byzantin à la fin du Xe et au XIe siècle', *TM* 6 (1976) 177–216.

71 Leo the Deacon 90; Miskawayh 209, 222; Bikhazi 860, 894–5; J. Shepard, 'Constantine VII, Caucasian openings and the road to Aleppo', in A. Eastmond (ed.), *Eastern approaches to Byzantium* (Aldershot 1999) 36–7.

72 Canard, *Histoire*, 836; Farag, 'The Aleppo question', 50.

73 Canard, 'Deux documents arabes sur Bardas Skleros', 61–2; Holmes, 'Byzantium's eastern frontier in the tenth and eleventh centuries', 100–1; J. H. Forsyth, *Byzantine - Arab Chronicle of Yahya ibn Sa'id* (PhD thesis, University of Michigan 1977) 402–9.

74 Yahya, PO XXIII 369; Walker, 'The "crusade" of John Tzimiskes in the light of new Arabic evidence', 323; Farag, *Byzantium and its Muslim neighbours during the reign of Basil II*, 42.

75 Matthew of Edessa, *Zhamanakagrut' iwn* (*Chronographia*), ed. and trans. Dosturian, *Armenia and the crusades*, 29–33.

76 Miskawayh 326–9; Yahya, PO XXIII 353–8; Canard, 'La date des expéditions mésopotamiennes de Jean Tzimiskès', 99–108; Walker, 'The "crusade" of John Tzimiskes in the light of new Arabic evidence', 320 n. 56.

IV

These differences could be explained by the changing circumstances in which the emperors found themselves. However, the changes in the strategic geography of the Near East in 969 and after should not be exaggerated. Although the Fatimids were a more formidable presence than the Iqshidids, they did not have complete control over Syria in the 970s, partly because of the heavy defeat they had suffered in 971 at Byzantine hands. When Tzimiskes moved south in 975 he encountered autonomous cities, not Fatimid governors. There is also a strong suggestion that after 971, the Fatimids had no real interest in a direct and exhausting conflict with the Byzantines over Syria.⁷⁷ Further east, the Hamdanids of Mosul were increasingly concentrating on Buyid frailties in Baghdad, and were less interested in the Byzantines.⁷⁸ In the west, the emergence of Sviatoslav did mean that John faced a major Balkan power. However, Skleros successfully beat back the Rus in 970, and it is questionable whether John needed to campaign in the Balkans in 971, although it may have been helpful in securing his legitimization as emperor.⁷⁹ Thus, it is hard to point to external pressures to explain the divergence. It was not circumstance that prevented John from attempting the conquest of swathes of Syria; nor did it cause Nikephoros to limit the attention he gave to the Balkans. Rather, operational and strategic considerations were the main factors in their decisions.

That there should be operational differences between the two is unsurprising. Contemporary authors saw them very differently. Nikephoros is described as a warrior monk, with a lifestyle to match. He is reported as wearing a hair shirt beneath his clothing, and one modern historian has called him 'the epitome of the pious warrior fighting for the Christian people.'⁸⁰ He is also presented as a stern disciplinarian—he trained his men relentlessly and ordered that soldiers who abandoned their shields were to be flogged.⁸¹ Leo the Deacon describes him thus:

Unyielding in every kind of undertaking, not softened or spoiled by physical pleasures ... a most upright judge and steadfast legislator ... strict and unbending in his prayers and all-night standing vigils to God and kept his mind undistracted during the singing of hymns, never letting it wander off to worldly thoughts.

77 Walker, 'A Byzantine victory over the Fatimids at Alexandretta (971)', *B 42* (1972) 439–40; idem, 'The "crusade" of John Tzimiskes in the light of new Arabic evidence', 306–11; idem, *Exploring an Islamic empire: Fatimid history and its sources* (London 2002) 306–7; Holmes, *Basil II*, 307, attests the increase in Fatimid activity in the 990s versus the previously 'sporadic' incursions. See M. Canard, 'L'imperialisme des Fatimides et leur propagande', *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales* 6 (1947) 167; Th. Bianquis, 'La prise du pouvoir par les Fatimides en Egypte (357-363/968-974)', *Annales Islamologiques* 11 (1972) 103–4.

78 *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. R. N. Frye, V (Cambridge 1975) 266.

79 P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan frontier* (Oxford 2000) 53.

80 Skylitzes 255; Matthew of Edessa, *Zhamanakagrut' iwn (Chronographia)*, ed. and trans. Dosturian, *Armenia and the crusades*, 22; A. Laiou, 'The Just War of eastern Christians and the Holy War of the crusaders', in R. Sorabji and D. Rodin (eds), *The ethics of war: shared problems in different traditions* (Aldershot 2006) 35. See also M. L. D. Riedel, *Fighting the good fight* (DPhil thesis, Oxford 2010).

81 Leo the Deacon 35–6 for drills and 57–8 for the flogging of the soldier.

Most people considered it a weakness in the man that he wanted everyone to preserve virtue uncompromised.⁸²

Leo's portrayal is probably excessively severe. Nikephoros was loved by the army and he took steps to ensure that he remained popular.⁸³ However, he remained an austere and remote figure. By contrast, contemporary descriptions of John reveal an almost complete mirror image. In contrast to the monastic Nikephoros, he was a hell raiser.

His strength was gigantic, and there was great dexterity and irresistible might in his hands. He also had a heroic spirit, fearless and imperturbable, which displayed supernatural courage in such a small frame; for he was not afraid of attacking single-handedly an entire enemy contingent, and after killing large numbers he would return again with great speed unscathed to his own close formation. He surpassed everyone of his generation in leaping, ball-playing, and throwing the javelin, and in drawing and shooting a bow ... He treated everyone kindly and graciously, lending the mercy of good deeds mentioned by the prophets ... John had the following fault, that sometimes he used to drink more than he should when he was carousing and he was unable to resist physical pleasures.⁸⁴

We should be mildly sceptical about these presentations. John's excommunicate status, and Polyeuktos' ban on his entering the Great Church at Constantinople, meant that even Leo would be unable to portray him as religious.⁸⁵ However, in these portraits we can easily discern the personality that made John, rather than Nikephoros, a better manager of men, and the mental focus that enabled Nikephoros to attend to one objective to the exclusion of any other.

However, the core difference was not operational, but strategic. Nikephoros saw the threat as coming exclusively from the Syrian Arabs. He therefore invested his energies in breaking the power of the Hamdanids of Aleppo and extending the empire's power in Syria, both to strengthen the Byzantine position there and to limit the risk of a rival power emerging. This view may not be unexpected from an aristocrat whose lands were concentrated in Cappadocia, and who had much more to gain from expansion in the south than elsewhere. However, origins are not decisive: Tzimiskes came from the same background, but his strategic view was wider. For him, threats came from many directions and his key war aims were always to neutralize the enemy forces and to project Byzantine power so that his enemies were simply afraid to fight. In the process, territory might have been added to the empire, but this was not really the purpose of

82 Leo the Deacon 89.

83 P. Lemerle, *The agrarian history of Byzantium. From the origins to the twelfth century*, trans. G. MacNiocaill (Galway 1979) 128–31; *On skirmishing warfare*, ed. G. T. Dennis, *Three Byzantine military treatises* (Washington, D. C. 1985) 216.

84 Leo the Deacon 96.

85 Leo the Deacon 99; Morris, 'Succession and usurpation', 202.

his activity and he does not seem consistently to have sought a material extension of Byzantine territory in the region.

Both strategies were successful – Nikephoros enlarged the empire in northern Syria and the Mediterranean; John left his eastern enemies so cowed and the empire with such prestige and security that it allowed Basil II to largely ignore that theatre of war. However, to describe them as consistent is to fail to give credit to two different visions of the empire's military strategy in the east and two very different emperors. They were both inheritors of the success of the long Byzantine advance. The emergence of the Byzantines from the mountains onto the Syrian plain had a profound and well-documented impact on the tactics of the army; it is hardly surprising that it also posed questions of the strategy. Nikephoros, John and indeed Basil all gave different answers and the one adopted for longest may have owed more to personal survival than geopolitical logic. Nikephoros' model of an autocratic, single-minded, campaign of (re)conquest in Syria did not outlast him; while John's alternative model—collegiate, aware of and responsive to the empire's multiple borders, seeking not so much to extend the Empire as create space around it—also died with him. Basil adopted neither vision, literally taking the Empire in another direction altogether. This rapid turnover of Emperors disguises the material differences of approach between them. Nikephoros' and John's campaigns were not only 'different in character' from what had gone before, but also from each other. Their backgrounds and their success may give the appearance of continuity, but it is a modern illusion.

The original source for Tzimiskes' Balkan campaign (971 AD) and the emperor's classicizing propaganda

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For their account of Ioannes Tzimiskes' Balkan campaign of 971 AD against the Rus, Leon the Deacon and Ioannes Skylitzes independently used a common source that was written soon after the emperor's triumph in Constantinople. This source classicized the emperor and his actions, drawing upon figures from the Roman Republic and including speeches and geographical digressions. This source accounts for the bulk of what we know of Tzimiskes' reign.

The purpose of this paper is to reconstruct the source behind the accounts by Leon the Deacon and Ioannes Skylitzes of Ioannes Tzimiskes' campaign in 971 AD against the Rus' in Bulgaria.² There is currently no consensus on this point, though I will argue that the evidence allows for greater clarity. One historian has stated that Leon was present on the campaign and witnessed the events that he describes,³ but this does not explain where Skylitzes derived his apparently independent information. Another scholar has proposed that the original source was imperial dispatches from the front.⁴ However, that source was far too literary to be an imperial dispatch – although the possibility cannot be ruled out that its author used such dispatches – and also included a description of the triumph at the end. Others believe that Leon and Skylitzes used different sources, but have not been able to define the nature of these sources more precisely

1 I thank Alice-Mary Talbot, Denis Sullivan, and the two anonymous readers for making valuable suggestions on earlier versions of this paper.

2 Leon the Deacon, *History* books 8–9, ed. C. B. Hase, *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis Historiae libri decem* (Bonn 1828). Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis of Histories: Ioannes Tzimiskes*, ed. I. Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Berlin and New York 1973) 284–313. For the historical context, see P. Stephenson, *Byzantium's Balkan frontier: a political study of the Northern Balkans, 900–1204* (Cambridge 2000) 51–55; for the battle, J. Haldon, *The Byzantine wars* (Stroud, Gloucestershire 2008) 149–57.

3 Haldon, *Byzantine wars*, 151, 214.

4 J. Howard-Johnston, 'The *De administrando imperio*: a re-examination of the text and a re-evaluation of its evidence about the Rus', in M. Kazanski et al., (eds), *Les centres proto-urbain russes entre Scandinavie, Byzance et Orient* (Paris 2000) 301–36, here 302–3.

and they do not account for their convergence with respect to the campaign.⁵ Another group of scholars refers to a single source behind the two accounts but also without explaining its scope and nature.⁶ In my view, the evidence supports this final possibility. Moreover, I propose that the original source only dealt with the expedition of 971 AD and perhaps its immediate background in 970 AD, as Theodosios the Deacon's poem *On the capture of Crete* also dealt with a single expedition and was written soon after the event.⁷ Furthermore, this now-lost source contributed nothing to Leon and Skylitzes' coverage of events after 971 AD.

The scholarly discussion of Leon and Skylitzes' sources has revolved around the question of their use of (hypothetical) pro-Phokas or pro-Skleros texts.⁸ Far less attention has been devoted to the sources for the reign of Tzimiskes, and the discrete nature of their material for the Balkan campaign has not generally been recognized, nor that it has little to do with the Phokas family. Therefore, the entire question of pro- or anti-Phokas sources will be side-stepped here as our source was pro-Tzimiskes and did not necessarily feature Phokades or Skleroi (though it may have, in subordinate roles). Given that Leon's coverage of the reign after the triumph of 971 AD is extremely condensed by comparison, and that Skylitzes omits later campaigns almost entirely, it is unlikely that our source extended beyond 971 AD. Moreover, given its panegyric nature, it is unlikely that it dealt with the murder of Nikephoros Phokas or, indeed, with the reign of Phokas at all. Granted, it has been argued that the account of Nikephoros' murder in Leon tries to exculpate Tzimiskes.⁹ If, as I believe, the original source for the 971 AD campaign did not cover any other part of Tzimiskes' reign, the white-wash of the murder suggests that other traditions favourable to Tzimiskes also existed and we should not roll them into one source. Absolving a usurper from direct participation in the murder of his uncle and predecessor would have been presented in a different kind of text than the heroic narrative of his subsequent wars against the Rus'. Once the detailed evidence

5 E.g. A. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί ιστορικοί και χρονογράφοι*, II (Athens 2002) 477–8, 481–2 summarizing previous opinions. E.-S. Kiapidou, *Ἡ Σύνοψη Ἱστοριῶν τοῦ Ἰωάννη Σκυλίτζη καὶ οἱ πηγές της (811–1057)* (Athens 2010) 103–10, 343, 365, hedges the question whether Skylitzes used Leon, but leans towards the negative.

6 E.g. V. Terras, 'Leo Diaconus and the ethnology of the Kievan Rus', *Slavic Review* 24 (1965) 395–406, here 396; S. McGrath, 'The battles of Dorostolon (971): rhetoric and reality,' in T. S. Miller and J. Nesbitt, (eds), *Peace and war in Byzantium: essays in honor of George T. Dennis, S.J.* (Washington D.C. 1995) 152–64, here 153. See also below.

7 *Theodosii diaconi de Creta capta*, ed. H. Criscuolo, (Leipzig 1979).

8 C. Holmes, *Basil II and the governance of empire (976–1025)* (Oxford 2005) ch. 4, focuses on the coverage of the following reign, but the same bias is in Kiapidou, *Ἡ Σύνοψη Ἱστοριῶν*, 95–103 (who, at 112–14, questions Holmes' postulation of a pro-Skleros source). The Introduction in A.-M. Talbot and D. F. Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon: Byzantine military expansion in the tenth century* (Washington D.C. 2005) 31–6, focuses almost exclusively on the Phokas question.

9 R. Morris, 'Succession and usurpation: politics and rhetoric in the late tenth century,' in P. Magdalino, (ed.), *New Constantines: the rhythm of imperial renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th centuries* (Aldershot 1994) 199–214, here 210.

for the original source for the 971 AD campaign has been presented, these hypotheses will appear more convincing.

The way forward was indicated by Michael McCormick in 1986, though no one seems to have picked up the thread that he found in this labyrinth. McCormick noted that the account of Tzimiskēs' triumph in Constantinople in Leon and Skylitzes contains an allusion to Plutarch's *Camillus*; also, Skylitzes' account, written a century after that of Leon, contains more of the allusion than does Leon. This means that Skylitzes independently used the same source that Leon had used and that he had probably not used Leon himself, at least not for this passage.¹⁰

Plutarch, *Camillus* 7.1: ὁ δὲ Κάμιλλος εἴτε μεγέθει τοῦ ἔργου... εἴτε ὑπὸ τῶν εὐδαιμονιζόντων αὐτὸν εἰς ὄγκον ἐξαρθεῖς καὶ φρόνημα νομίμου καὶ πολιτικῆς ἀρχῆς ἐπαχθέστερον, τὰ τε ἄλλα σοβαρῶς ἐθριάμβευσε καὶ τέθριππον ὑποξευξάμενος λευκόπῳλον ἐπέβη καὶ διεξήλασε τῆς Ῥώμης.¹¹

Leon the Deacon, *History* 9.12: ἦγον δὲ καὶ χρυσοκόλλητον λευκόπῳλον ἄρμα· οὐ προσεπιβῆναι τοῦτον ἡξίου, καὶ τὸν νενομισμένον καταγαγεῖν θριάμβον.

Ioannes Skylitzes, *Ioannes Tzimiskēs* 18 (p. 310): τέθριππον ὄχημα λευκοπῳλῶν ἔχοντες ἡτοιμασμένον πάνυ διαπρεπῶς καὶ τοῦτου ἐπιβάντα ἀξιούντες θριαμβεῦσαι τὸν βασιλέα. ὁ δὲ μηδὲν σοβαρὸν ἐθέλων, ἀλλὰ μέτριον ἐαυτὸν ἐπιδεικνύμενος...

Whoever wrote the original account of Tzimiskēs' triumph used Plutarch as a template to link his hero, an emperor of the Romans, to an ancient Roman hero and conqueror, but also (as McCormick noted) to highlight by contrast how he surpassed him. Camillus was vainglorious in victory (σοβαρῶς), the very word that our author chose to designate Tzimiskēs' humility (followed by μέτριος): the emperor refused the chariot drawn by four white horses brought out by the clergy and citizens of Constantinople. This is an artful way of using allusions. It is not mere 'imitation' or 'affectation' but a subtle redeployment that establishes an intertextual dialogue. Examples can be cited from almost all eras of Byzantine literature. Suffice it to cite here the subversive use of Aischylos' *Eumenides* in the almost contemporary *Life of Saint Nikon*, and the use of the Alexander Romance and the queen of Sheba in the *Vita Basilii* section of Theophanes Continuatus.¹²

10 M. McCormick, *Eternal victory: triumphal rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West* (Cambridge and Paris 1986) 174.

11 'As for Camillus, whether it was because of the magnitude of his accomplishment ... or because he contracted a lofty idea of himself from all those congratulating him, he developed an attitude that was antithetical to lawful boundaries and civil authority. He celebrated a triumph in a grandiose manner, harnessing four white horses to a chariot and driving it through Rome.'

12 Respectively: A. Kaldellis, *The Christian Parthenon: classicism and pilgrimage in Byzantine Athens* (Cambridge 2009) 97–100; and I. Anagnostakis, 'Τό επεισόδιο της Δανιηλίδας: Πληροφορίες καθημερινού βίου ή μυθοπλαστικά στοιχεία;' in C. G. Angelidi, (ed.), *Ἡ καθημερινή ζωή στό Βυζάντιο: Τομές καὶ συνέχειες στὴν ἑλληνιστικὴ καὶ ρωμαϊκὴ παράδοση* (Athens 1989) 375–90. I have discussed many other examples of this literary practice in other publications.

Moreover, as the panegyric account was probably written soon after the event itself, it is unlikely that it would have invented the detail of the four white horses. This means that the ‘clergy and people’ who brought out the chariot, or the emperor himself if the ceremony had been choreographed in advance, were already following the model of Camillus’ triumph in Plutarch. The literary text merely expanded on the reference. Another instance of ‘antiquarianism in practice’ can be cited from this period: Athenian landmarks were being explained through information in Plutarch and, on the basis of Pausanias’ account of the temple of Athena Pollias, the Parthenon was furnished with a perpetually burning lamp.¹³ It is no surprise that imperial authorities turned to ancient narratives to stage proper Roman triumphs.¹⁴

Where there is one such allusion there are bound to be more. Many of the events that took place during the 971 AD campaign have ancient precedents. I will discuss these first; then, I will ascertain whether material can be assigned to the original source that is preserved in only one of our two historians, especially the speeches and digressions; and, finally, I will speculate about an element of the original source that may be missing from both Leon and Skylitzes. All along I will be assessing the historical reliability of the reports. Therefore, we begin with an episode at the end of the climactic battle between Tzimiskes and the Rus’. The Romans were being pushed back, the emperor dashed forward to save the day, and (to quote Leon, though Skylitzes is similar)

[a]t the same time a wind and rainstorm broke out, pouring down heavily from the sky, and struck the enemy, and the dust that was stirred up irritated their eyes. And it is said that a man on a white horse appeared, who went ahead of the Romans and encouraged them to advance against the Skythians; and he broke through the enemy regiments in a wondrous fashion, and threw them into disarray. And they say that the men in the camp had not seen this man previously, nor did they see him again after the battle, although the emperor looked for him, so that he might present him with suitable gifts... But despite the search, he was not found. Therefore, a definite suspicion was aroused that it was the great martyr Theodoros [Stratelates], whom the emperor used to beseech for help in battle.¹⁵

Mutatis mutandis, this closely replays the Dioskouroi’s intervention in the battle of lake Regillus after the expulsion of the last king, Tarquinius Superbus, where the Romans prevailed over the Latins. Livy strangely omitted the Dioskouroi from his account of the battle, so our main source is Dionysios of Halikarnassos (many other authors independently knew the story).¹⁶ Dionysios would have been available to our tenth-century author; in fact, specific allusions to his *Roman Antiquities* have been detected in four

13 Kaldellis, *Parthenon*, 183–4, 200–5.

14 See below for the triumphal aspect.

15 Leon, *History* 9.9; tr. Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 197.

16 Dionysios of Halikarnassos, *Roman Antiquities* 6.13; for the sources and discussion, see R. M. Ogilvie, *A commentary on Livy, Books 1–5* (Oxford 1965) 283–9, including references to other battlefield appearances by the Dioskouroi.

passages of Leon (and there may be more), though only one of the four is in his (derivative) account of the Balkan campaign and it occurs also in an earlier book of his *History*.¹⁷ The current state of research does not allow us to speculate whether these allusions were introduced by Leon or whether he found them in his sources, or some combination of the two. At any rate, there are no specific verbal parallels between Dionysios' account of the ride of the Dioskouroi and our two accounts (in Leon and Skylitzes) of the intervention of St Theodoros before Dorostolon. Yet other accounts would also have existed in the tenth century (e.g. Dion Kassios, now too fragmentary), and these may have provided our author with his template. The Dioskouroi appeared in many battles in Greece as well, sometimes riding white horses, but I will argue that lake Regillus was undeniably the narrative model.¹⁸

There were, of course, two Dioskouroi at lake Regillus compared to our one saint, and, at least in Dionysios, they appeared in Rome as well after the battle to announce the victory, which has no parallel in the accounts of the battle against the Rus' (at least not in our derivative versions). However, the conclusion of the story in Dionysios closely reflects our narrative:

And it is said that after they left the Forum they were not seen again by anyone, though a great search was made for them . . . they concluded that it was the same gods who had appeared in both places and were convinced that the apparitions had been those of Castor and Pollux.

The failed-search-and-realization motif is common to both Leon and Skylitzes. Moreover, the Dioskouroi's appearance at lake Regillus functioned etiologically, to explain the temple of Castor and Pollux in the Forum. So too, in his parallel account of the same apparition, Skylitzes says that Tzimiskēs had the saint's church rebuilt to honor his assistance.¹⁹ Skylitzes also notes that the battle took place on the day that the saint's memory was celebrated, just as Dionysios goes on to relate the annual commemoration in the Dioskouroi's honour that was instituted on the very day of the battle (the Ides of Quintilis). In sum, the source for 971 AD formatted its account to the etiological, monumental, and festal aspects of lake Regillus, adapting them to the circumstances of the tenth century. Finally, it is possible that the word Skylitzes uses twice in his account to characterize the saint's intervention (ἐπικουρία, once with θειοτέρα), alluded to the Dioskouroi's name very in the original source.²⁰

The mention of the feast day raises additional questions. Skylitzes says that 'the battle occurred on the very day when we are accustomed to celebrate the memory of

17 See the Index Locorum in Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 262.

18 W. K. Pritchett, 'Military epiphanies,' in idem, *The Greek state at war, Part III: Religion* (Berkeley 1979) 11–46.

19 Ioannes Skylitzes, *Synopsis of Histories: Ioannes Tzimiskēs* 17 (p. 309). For problems in locating this church, see Holmes, *Basil II*, 218 n. 113.

20 *θεία ἐπικουρία* could be used for other types of divine assistance; see, e.g. *Life of Elias the Younger* 14, ed. G. R. Taibbi, *Vita di Sant'Elia il Giovane* (Palermo 1962) 20.

the Stratelates.' The problem is that the feast day of the saint was 7 February and the commemoration of his translation was 8 June,²¹ whereas the battle took place in July. Leon says that it was fought on Friday, 24 July, but 24 July in 971 AD fell on a Monday, so either the day or the date is wrong (though not the month).²² It would appear that our source played loose with chronology, perhaps in order to preserve the link between the day of the battle and the feast in honour of the white horseman, a link that he would have found in the ancient source he was using for lake Regillus (also, the Ides of Quintilis is 15 July).

We may be tempted to rationalize the appearance of St Theodoros, e.g. by suggesting that the white horseman was 'in fact almost certainly' the emperor leading his guard.²³ However, if this had been the case our panegyric text would have highlighted it, as it tries hard but unconvincingly in other places to suggest that the emperor fought in person (see below). Had the emperor led the final charge, that action would have dominated the interpretation of the battle. We are dealing with a (subsequent) literary elaboration of the belief that the battle was won (partly) through saintly intervention, a belief that probably went back to the battle itself in some form. Skylitzes says that the emperor built a church in honour of the saint, and Leon states that he renamed the city Theodoroupolis.²⁴ Once again, our text is building upon imperial propaganda about the battle. We cannot say, however, whether the charge of the white horseman was an original element or was generated in the course of the literary elaboration. The author made the saint's intervention vivid to the imagination and embedded it in the chronology and monuments of the battle.

In the fifth century, Theodoretos of Kyrrhos reported a legend regarding the battle by the river Frigidus between Theodosius I and Argobast in 394 A.D: John the Evangelist and Philip the Apostle, dressed in white and riding white horses, appeared to Theodosius as he prayed before the battle and told him to take heart after an initial defeat (they are called ἐπίκουροι here). Moreover, the battle was famously won when a strong cold wind blew dust against the enemy.²⁵ This is roughly the same conjunction of events as in 971 AD, but the narrative of the latter is clearly based on lake Regillus and not Frigidus. At Frigidus, the saints did not take part in the battle and appeared only in a vision. No search was made for them afterwards, nor were churches dedicated in their honour to thank

21 H. Delehay, *Les légendes grecques des saints militaires* (Paris 1909) 15. He was sometimes confused with St Theodoros Teron (the 'recruit' rather than the 'general'), whose feast day was 17 February.

22 Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 196 n. 43, citing F. Dölger, 'Die Chronologie des grossen Feldzuges des Kaisers Johannes Tzimiskes gegen die Russen,' *BZ* 32 (1932) 275–92, here 290–1. For the cult of St Theodoros, see C. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition* (Aldershot 2003) 44–66. Walter (133) generally notes the parallel with the Dioskouroi (and cites previous bibliography).

23 Haldon, *Byzantine wars*, 156.

24 Leon, *History* 9.12. For a seal by a *katepano* of Theodoroupolis found at Preslav, see J.-C. Cheynet in J. Wortley (ed.), *John Skylitzes: a synopsis of Byzantine history, 811–1057* (Cambridge 2010) 293 n. 69.

25 Theodoretos of Kyrrhos, *Ecclesiastical History* 5.24; for the battle, see S. Williams and G. Friell, *Theodosius: the empire at bay* (New Haven and London 1994) 134–5.

them for their assistance, nor was there a coincidence with their feast days. In fact, the imagery of John and Philip also alluded to the Dioskouroi, although their role was different. The same is true of other saints who appear on white horses in a military context in Byzantine literature.²⁶ It was the ancient Roman template that enabled our anonymous author to fashion one of the first accounts in Byzantine historiography of a personal, physical intervention by a saint in a historic battle.

Other aspects of the campaign may have replayed episodes from ancient Roman history. According to Skylitzes, when Tzimiskēs reached Rhaidestos he was met by two Rus' envoys who were in fact spies. Perceiving their nature, he ordered them to tour the Roman camp and allowed them to see everything so that they could inform their ruler of the discipline of his army. While this violated the prescriptions of the Byzantine military manuals,²⁷ it was exactly what Scipio had done with the three spies sent by Hannibal before the battle of Zama in 202 B.C: he had ordered them to tour his camp and report everything they saw to Hannibal. The sequence of narration in Skylitzes is identical to that in Polybios, though there is no verbal imitation. However, that may be due to the fact that the original source has passed through the filter of Skylitzes' homogenizing prose,²⁸ and may have been based on a different ancient source to begin with.

Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskēs* 9 (p. 295): He ordered them to pass through the entire camp and inspect the ranks ... When they had been all around and seen everything, he enjoined them to take themselves off and tell their commander with what a well-organized and disciplined host the Roman emperor had come.²⁹

Polybios, *Histories* 15.5.4–7: He bid a tribune to attend them and clearly point out to them every aspect of the camp ... He sent them out and ordered them to specify to Hannibal everything that had happened to them.³⁰

Similar displays of camp discipline intended to inspire awe in envoys/spies are reported for the Spartans at Thermopylai and Belisarios against the Persians in 542 AD,³¹ but Scipio's action is an exact template. Conversely, the report that Tzimiskēs sent out 'bilingual men, clothed in Scythian garb, to the camps and abodes of the

26 The general Mousilikēs, about to attack the Saracens in Sicily in 882 AD, called on St Ignatios 'and saw him, visible to the eye, in the air, as if sitting upon a white horse, bidding him to advance the army on the right flank': Nikitas David Paphlagon, *The Life of St Ignatios* in PG 105 col. 564 (I thank Charis Messis for the reference); for this text, see now I. Tamarkina, 'The date of the *Life of the Patriarch Ignatius* reconsidered', *BZ* 99 (2006) 615–30. More remotely similar descriptions are in the *Life of St Basileios the Younger*: D. Sullivan, A.-M. Talbot, S. McGrath, *The Life of St Basil the Younger: introduction, critical edition and annotated English translation* (Dumbarton Oaks, Washington, D.C. forthcoming).

27 E.g. Leon VI, *Taktika* 17.110. The manuals are all about obtaining information secretly from the enemy and, conversely, keeping the state of your forces unknown to him.

28 On this point, see Holmes, *Basil II*, 149 and passim. For the same problem in an ancient compiler-historian, see K. S. Sacks, *Diodorus Siculus and the First Century* (Princeton 1990).

29 Tr. Wortley, *Skylitzes*, 281–2.

30 Cf. Livy 30.29; Appianus, *Punic Wars* 7.39.

31 Herodotos 7.208; Prokopios, *Wars* 2.21.

enemy, to learn their plans and communicate them to the emperor,³² resonates with similar actions by ancient Roman commanders, including Scipio, Tiberius Gracchus (the Elder), and the pair Marius-Sertorius, the latter being the closest match.³³ Perhaps we should not press this one too closely. The type of camp established by Tzimiskēs' army before Dorostolon conforms to distinctive middle Byzantine practices, despite the antiquarian reference here to 'the customs of the Romans.'³⁴

Skylitzes mentions another curiosity that is usually ignored in modern accounts of the battle. After a sortie by the Rus', who were besieged in Dorostolon, had been repulsed,

Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 14 (p. 305): the Romans were despoiling the fallen barbarians when they came upon women among the dead who were equipped like men and had fought alongside the men against the Romans (τοὺς δὲ πεσόντας τῶν βαρβάρων σκυλεύοντες οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι εὗρον καὶ γυναῖκας ἐν τοῖς ἀναιρεθεῖσι κεκίμενας ἀνδρικῶς ἐσταλμένας καὶ μετὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἀγωνισαμένας).

This was not the first time that Amazons had fought Romans. In 65 BC, after defeating the Albanoi (in the Caucasus), the Romans were despoiling the fallen barbarians (μετὰ γὰρ τὴν μάχην σκυλεύοντες οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι τοὺς βαρβάρους) when, according to Plutarch, they found Amazon equipment, but no female bodies.³⁵ The motif and language are basically the same, though the details are different. However, the motif was not uncommon in ancient historiography. Relying on a lost source, the twelfth-century historian Ioannes Zonaras provides a version that is closer to that of Skylitzes. When Odenathos chased the Persian army out of the empire in ca. 260,

Among the dead of the Persian army who were being despoiled, women, too, are said to have been found who had been equipped and armored in the fashion of men (ἐν μέντοι τοῖς πεσοῦσιν ἐκ τοῦ Περσικοῦ στρατεύματος σκυλευομένοις λέγονται καὶ γυναῖκες εὗρεθῆναι κατ' ἄνδρας ἐσταλμέναι καὶ ὀπλισμέναι).³⁶

32 Leon, *History* 6.11; tr. Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 158.

33 Polybios 14.1.13; Appianos, *Spanish Wars* 43; Plutarch, *Sertorius* 3.2: 'Wearing Celtic dress and acquiring the most common expressions of their language in order to be able to handle whatever conversations he found himself in, he mingled among the barbarians; seeing some crucial things for himself and hearing about others through report, he returned to Marius.'

34 Leon, *History* 9.1. See P. Rance, 'The date of the military compendium of Syrianus Magister (formerly the sixth-century Anonymus Byzantinus),' *BZ* 100 (2007) 701–37, here 721.

35 Plutarch, *Pompeius* 35.5; cf. Appianos, *Mithridatic War* 103. This may have been derived from the panegyric history of Theophanes of Mytilene, who was emphasizing the parallels between his patron Pompeius and Alexander the Great: E. Rawson, *Intellectual life in the Late Roman Republic* (London 1985) 108–9; G. Migliorati, 'Teofane di Mitilene fonte di Diodoro Siculo: Sui frammenti della "Bibliotheca Historica" intorno a Pompeo,' in A. Valvo and G. Manzoni, (eds), *Analecta Brixiana: Contributi dell'Istituto di filologia e storia dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore* (Milan 2004) 105–24, here 117–18, 123; and I. Östenberg, *Staging the world: spoils, captives, and representations in the Roman triumphal procession* (Oxford 2009) 148.

36 Ioannes Zonaras, *Chronicle* 12.23, ed. M. Pinder, *Ioannis Zonarae Annales*, II (Bonn 1844) 596; tr. T. M. Banchich and E. N. Lane, *The History of Zonaras from Alexander Severus to the Death of*

He adds that 'some women of this sort were also taken alive by the Romans.' Unfortunately, we do not know the source of this story, which closely matches the language of Skylitzes. Again, literary resonances to ancient Romans and Amazons do not mean that we should reject the possibility that Tzimiskes' men did find such women. In the so-called *Chronicle of 811*, it is said that the Bulgars, who were about to fight against Nikephoros I, 'hired the Avars and neighbouring Slavs, arming even the women like men.'³⁷

At this point, we should face a methodological problem – the question of material that survives in only one of our two authors. Leon and Skylitzes used one source for the Balkan campaign of 971 AD, although they used it in different ways as they had different purposes as authors. There is considerable convergence in the information they relate, and we can reconstruct the original, at least in outline, for the ride of St Theodoros and the triumph of Tzimiskes. But what about episodes and digressions that are found in only one of the two texts? The allusions to Scipio and the Amazons in Skylitzes almost certainly come from the common source, as Skylitzes is not prone to that type of elaboration on his own. We can check his narrative against his sources, when the latter survive, and he tended to omit such material.³⁸ It is possible he did not know that these episodes contained allusions to ancient Roman history, which makes his testimony more valuable for the purposes of reconstructing his original source. However, Leon was far more prone (or receptive) to allusions, learned antiquarianism, and speeches. His narrative, not merely of the 971 AD campaign, is sprinkled with Homeric and other allusions and episodes modelled on the sixth-century historian Agathias, in some cases word-for-word.³⁹ Nor can we rule out the possibility that Leon embellished his source for 971 AD with his own elaborations.⁴⁰

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Theodosius the Great (London and New York 2009) 54, slightly modified. At 109 n. 68, Banchich admits that we do not know the source of this story. In discussing Amazons, Prokopios, *Wars* 8.3.10, says that in his own time, after many Hunnic raids, 'the Romans search through the bodies of the fallen (Ῥωμαῖοι διερευνώμενοι τῶν πεπτωκότων τὰ σώματα) and find women among them.'

37 Ed. I. Dujčev, 'La chronique byzantine de l'an 811,' *TM* 1 (1965) 205–54, here 213; tr. in P. Stephenson, "'About the emperor Nikephoros and how he leaves his bones in Bulgaria": A context for the controversial "Chronicle of 811",' *DOP* 60 (2006) 87–109, here 89.

38 Holmes, *Basil II*, 134–5.

39 Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 11 (their notes document his use of ancient sources, as does the Index locorum at 262–4); also L. Hoffmann, 'Geschichtsschreibung oder Rhetorik? Zum *logos parkleitikos* bei Leon Diakonos,' in M. Grünbart, (ed.), *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter* (New York and Berlin 2007) 105–39, here 106 n. 6 for previous studies. For the Homeric template, see A. Markopoulos, 'Ζητήματα κοινωνικού φύλου στὸν Λέοντα τὸν Διάκονο,' in S. Kalamanis et al., (eds), *Ενθύμησις Νικολάου Μ. Παναγιωτάκη* (Herakleio, Greece 2000) 475–93, here 488.

40 For example, Leon says that 'the Rus, governed by their habitual ferocity and passion, attacked the Romans with a charge, bellowing as if possessed, but the Romans rushed to meet them with discipline and practical skill': *History* 8.10; tr. Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 185–6, slightly modified. This may reflect how Trojans and Achaeans approach each other at the beginning of book 3 of the *Iliad*, although there are no verbal parallels and Leon's language for describing the Roman advance echoes Byzantine strategic thinking: G. T. Dennis, 'The Byzantines in battle,' in K. Tsiknakis, (ed.), *Το εμπόλεμο Βυζάντιο*

Let us consider, for example, the question of whether the original source included speeches. Leon does include speeches: two of them exchanged through messengers between Tzimiskes and Svjetoslav before the outbreak of the war; two speeches by Tzimiskes in quick succession at the beginning of the campaign; and a speech by Svjetoslav and discussion by his council of nobles, the so-called *komenton*, during the siege of Dorostolon.⁴¹ Skylitzes' account of the campaign does not include any speeches. Yet it is clear that the source he was working from did have speeches, for at one point he notes that 'Svjetoslav spoke many words of exhortation and addressed his people as the occasion required.'⁴² It is more likely that Skylitzes omitted a speech that he found in his source here than that he invented a reference to a speech without telling us anything about it. Interestingly, the context of this speech (before the battle for Preslav) is not the same as the one speech of Svjetoslav in Leon (which is at the *komenton*). Skylitzes additionally refers to a speech by Svjetoslav after the capture of Preslav and to paired battlefield speeches by Tzimiskes and Svjetoslav before the first battle for Dorostolon.⁴³ Nothing in Leon corresponds to them. Paradoxically, it is safer to assume that the original source included speeches where Skylitzes refers obliquely to them than where Leon places them, because he may have been engaging in his own rhetorical elaborations and also because when he omits speeches he leaves no trace of them. On the other hand, Skylitzes refers to a speech by Svjetoslav at the *komenton* as well (although omitting anything in direct speech), and his report of the discussion there confirms Leon's account.⁴⁴ Therefore, it would seem that the common source had speeches at the places where both Leon and Skylitzes signal their existence, and possibly more, though Leon and Skylitzes dealt with them in almost opposite ways from each other.

What, then, about the antiquarian and ethnographic digressions in Leon? Skylitzes, as we have seen, generally omits such material and has done so here. Their common source had a penchant for classical models and allusions, but what can we ascribe to it specifically? First, let us be clear about the passages in question. At the beginning of Tzimiskes' expedition there is a fanciful digression on the course of the Danube, justified because Tzimiskes sent a fleet there before he marched out;⁴⁵ this is followed by a digression on the history of Adrianople, tracing it to Orestes and the emperor

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(905-1205 *at.*) (Athens 1997) 165-78. However, if Homeric influence is allowed, it is not clear to whom the allusion should be attributed.

41 Leon the Deacon, *History* 6.9-10, 8.2, 8.3, 9.7. For the meaning of this term, see the theories listed by Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 194 n. 40. For Leon's speeches in general, see Hoffmann, 'Geschichtsschreibung oder Rhetorik?' 130-4. I am focusing here on the campaign itself and not the negotiations leading up to it in 6.8-11, which include speeches of their own.

42 Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 9 (pp. 295-6). He also refers perfunctorily to an exchange of messages before the outbreak of the war: *Tzimiskes* 5 (p. 288).

43 Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 11 (pp. 298-9).

44 Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 15 (pp. 305-6). Here I omit Leon and Skylitzes' accounts of the negotiations that followed the Rus' surrender, reported in similar terms by the two historians.

45 Leon, *History* 8.1.

Hadrian;⁴⁶ later there is a digression on the (unhistorical) foundation of Dorostolon by Constantine;⁴⁷ finally, there is a digression on the savage pagan customs of the Rus', which combines Herodotos, the *Iliad*, and Ezekiel with distinctive, and therefore presumably authentic, contemporary material.⁴⁸ These are the kinds of passages we expect to find in the source for the 971 AD campaign, especially the digressions on the two cities, which promote the text's Roman agenda by linking them to famous emperors. Furthermore, Leon probably did not compose them himself because he does not digress elsewhere in his book in this manner where he is not following that source. The only parallels that we find are different: a comment on the magic and shamelessness that the Saracens of Crete learned from Mani and Muhammad and on the troglodyte past of Kappadokia, although in explaining the fall of Nikephoros Phokas he offers two classical and one biblical *exempla* of men brought down by hubris.⁴⁹ In narrating the events of 971 AD his antiquarian digressions become longer and more frequent. I propose that these digressions derived from the original source.

Moreover, it is curious that even though the Mysians (Bulgarians) and the Tauroskythians (Rus') appear in Leon's narrative on the reign of Nikephoros, they are not 'introduced' there as people in a special way, not even when the latter invade and conquer the former.⁵⁰ However, when Tzimiskes begins to negotiate with Svjetoslav in 970 AD, we suddenly find an antiquarian digression on the origin of the Mysians and their past relations with the Romans, emphasizing that Mysia really belonged to the Romans.⁵¹ It is tempting to think that this comes from the original source for the campaign of 971 AD, which was looking back here to the previous year and the run-up to the war (namely, the failed negotiations). We should, of course, be cautious at this point, as we do not know the exact scope of that source's chronological coverage. However, a narrative that described only the defeat of the Rus' in 971 AD, without explaining the context of the hostilities from an imperial point of view, would have been strange.

Let us summarize our conclusions so far. Leon and Skylitzes used the same source for the 971 AD campaign. It is probable that they used it independently of each other, and it has still not been proved that Skylitzes used Leon's *History* at all (certainly not for Tzimiskes). This source was a detailed narrative, featuring heroic battles, sieges, speeches by the two rulers, and it ended with Tzimiskes' triumph in Constantinople. The author modelled some of these episodes on passages in ancient historiography dealing with the Roman Republic, effectively comparing Tzimiskes to Roman heroes of the past. He also included digressions on the cities along Tzimiskes' route, highlighting their

46 Leon, *History* 8.2.

47 Leon, *History* 8.8.

48 Leon, *History* 9.6. See Terras, 'Leo Diaconus and the ethnology of the Kievan Rus'; and my own study *Ethnography in Byzantium* (in preparation).

49 Respectively: Leon, *History* 2.6, 3.1, 5.3.

50 E.g. Leon, *History* 4.5, 4.6, 5.1–2.

51 Leon, *History* 6.8–9.

Roman past and thereby justifying the invasion of Bulgaria; a geographical digression on the Danube; and ethnographies of the Bulgarians and Rus', including surveys of their relationship with the empire. It is likely that this source recounted the diplomatic exchanges that took place in 970 AD and led to the outbreak of war (these are found in Leon). If so, this source accounts for most of the narrative information about Tzimiskes' reign that was available to Byzantines soon after his death, and also to us today. If we remove this material, all we are left with are summary accounts of the emperor's relations with the clergy, and the revolts of the Phokas family and their rivalry with the Skleroi, which were presumably narrated in different kinds of sources.⁵² Scholars have focused almost exclusively on the reconstruction of those other sources largely in order to understand better the rise of the great families and so Byzantine social history. For the most part, they have ignored the source for the campaign of 971 AD, although it seems to have been a fascinating work of classicizing literature. It may have been offered as a Tzimiscean response to Theodosios the Deacon's *On the capture of Crete*, which praised the martial prowess of Nikephoros Phokas in similarly classicizing epic terms. This lost history was almost certainly written in the immediate aftermath of the 971 AD campaign itself.

We are mostly at the mercy of this single text when it comes to the events of 970–971 AD. Nevertheless, it was not as unreliable as the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, with its embarrassing apologetic contortions and insistence that the war was a victory for the Rus'.⁵³ It was produced soon after the victory and was intended for an audience that had participated in it or had access to thousands of witnesses who had just come back from the front. This does not mean that everything in it is to be taken literally, especially its 'Roman variations' on the emperor's actions and personal glory. The text is panegyric and reports actions that probably did not happen as reported, or at all. We can be sceptical about the reception of the Rus' spies, too magnanimously Scipionic and against regulations, but not impossible. One aspect of this panegyric stance merits attention. The text tries hard to give the impression that Tzimiskes fought in person, or that he was the kind of emperor who would fight in person given the chance. We should note that this was in an era when heroic ideals and single combat were increasing in popularity with the military aristocracy, as has been widely noted in connection with the pro-Phokas or pro-Skleros texts of this period.⁵⁴ But Tzimiskes' actions are reported in inconclusive

52 The digression in Leon, *History* 7.7, on the battle of Anchialos (917 AD) and the blinding of Leon Phokas, presumably derives from such sources.

53 S. H. Cross and O. P. Sherbowitz-Wetzor, tr., *The Russian Primary Chronicle: Laurentian text* (Cambridge, MA 1953) 87–90. Cf. J. Shepard, 'Some problems of Russo-Byzantine relations c. 860–1050,' *Slavonic and East European Review* 52 (126) (1974) 10–33, here 23.

54 E.g. C. Roueché, 'Byzantine writers and readers: storytelling in the eleventh century,' in R. Beaton (ed.), *The Greek novel AD 1–1985* (London 1988) 123–33; E. McGeer, *Sowing the dragon's teeth: Byzantine warfare in the tenth century* (Washington D.C. 1995) 219–23. A. Kazhdan noted the militarization of the imperial image in this period: 'The aristocracy and the imperial idea', in M. Angold, (ed.), *The Byzantine aristocracy IX to XII centuries* (Oxford 1984) 43–57; idem and A. W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the*

ways: he is not actually depicted in hand-to-hand combat nor are any of his feats or victims specified. When his soldiers balked at storming the citadel at Preslav, Tzimiskes took up his weapons and ran ahead of everyone, shaming them into attacking as well.⁵⁵ This also may have been based on any number of episodes in the lives of ancient generals, here Alexander the Great or Julius Caesar. But those two did fight on occasion; I am sceptical about Tzimiskes. In the final battle for Dorostolon, before St Theodoros' intervention and when the Romans were beginning to yield, the emperor rallied his guard, 'brandished his spear mightily, and advanced against the enemy ... The Romans were put to shame by the emperor's assault and wheeled round their horses.'⁵⁶ Lots of noise, but we do not actually see him fight. Skylitzes reports that the emperor waded into the frontline of the battle (τὴν ἀκμὴν τοῦ πολέμου) but all he appeared to do there was to arrange for the distribution of wine and water to thirsty soldiers.⁵⁷ The original source tried hard to make it *seem* that the emperor had fought in person without actually saying that he did.

Leon has condensed the two battles that seem to have occurred after the *komenton* of the Rus' nobles into one. Skylitzes preserves a fuller account, with two battles in close succession before the Rus' surrendered. In the lull between the two, he has Tzimiskes, out of concern for the harm being done to the Romans in the fighting, offer to resolve the issue in single combat, though Svjetoslav refuses in vague terms.⁵⁸ I find this episode improbable. The model on which it is based may be identified in due course. Moreover, it was the kind of panegyric boast that would have been difficult to refute, even for those who had participated in the campaign. How many people would have known what messages passed between the two camps?

There is one more passage to consider that appears in the text of only one of our two historians. At the beginning of his account of the reign, Leon includes a positive *ekphrasis* of the new emperor's appearance, stressing his beauty, strength, and martial abilities. The text states that he fought in person, although it alludes only vaguely to his exploits and seems to refer to the years before his accession. The passage proceeds to compare his skill with the bow to that of Odysseus, it mentions his skill at polo, and panegyrically highlights his generosity. It concludes by faulting him for drinking too much at parties and succumbing to bodily temptations.⁵⁹ This passage has been seen as 'a fragment from an official panegyric, emphasizing the soldierly virtues that were becoming the

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eleventh and twelfth centuries (Berkeley 1985) 110–16; now D. G. Angelov, 'Emperors and patriarchs as ideal children and adolescents: literary conventions and cultural expectations', in A. Papaconstantinou and A.-M. Talbot, (eds), *Becoming Byzantine: children and childhood in Byzantium* (Washington D. C. 2009) 85–125, here 108.

55 Skylitzes, *Synopsis*: Tzimiskes 10 (p. 298), not in Leon.

56 Leon, *History* 9.9; tr. Talbot and Sullivan *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 196–7.

57 Skylitzes, *Synopsis*: Tzimiskes 15 (p. 306).

58 Skylitzes, *Synopsis*: Tzimiskes 16 (pp. 307–8).

59 Leon, *History* 6.3.

commonplace of imperial portrayal at the time.’⁶⁰ The question as to whether it could have come from our source probably cannot be resolved. Its placement at the start of Tzimiskes’ reign, immediately before his involvement in domestic and ecclesiastical affairs, does not support this hypothesis. However, Leon could move passages around to suit the flow and logic of his own narrative, or modify them if necessary. In two earlier passages, he seems to allude to this later description of the emperor’s daring and short stature, which suggests that his approach to his sources was, partly, to interweave them in a synthetic way: he did not follow one source until it gave out and then pick up the next.⁶¹ The comparison with Odysseus suits our habitually classicizing text; moreover, if the *ekphrasis* of the emperor’s appearance occurred at the beginning of that source it would balance out nicely with that of Svjetoslav at the end, as they were the two opponents.⁶² However, the reference to Tzimiskes’ faults cannot have come from a panegyric. It is the sort of thing that is said about an emperor after he has died, in the summation of his personality and reign. There are too many possible sources for such passages, including Leon’s autopsy, and we should best leave it at that.

The contours and literary ambitions of our lost source should be reasonably clear by this point. It may take its rightful place among the heroic historical narratives being written in the second half of the tenth century, such as Theodosios the Deacon’s *On the capture of Crete* and the pro-Phokas or pro-Skleros accounts, whatever form they took exactly. This text was intended to glorify Tzimiskes and accounted for the majority of information that was later available about his reign, even though it focused on a small period of time.

I will now offer a conjectural supplement to our knowledge of this text by extrapolating a narrative about Tzimiskes and the Theotokos that has left traces in our derivative accounts. This reconstruction is a tenuous proposal and is offered in the spirit of speculative reconstruction. None of the conclusions reached so far depend upon it.

When Tzimiskes returned to the capital in triumph, the people of the City came out, as we saw earlier, with a gilded chariot pulled by four white horses. However, he ‘made a show of his own humility’, placing the Bulgarian royal insignia and crown in it instead, topped by an icon of the Mother of God, while he chose to ride behind it.⁶³ This moment has rightly been seen as a major step in the evolution of the cult of icons of the Theotokos and their association with military triumph.⁶⁴ However, a curious detail has been overlooked. Leon notes that this icon the emperor ‘had seized in Mysia (ἦν ἐκ Μυσίας εἰληφε)’, i.e. Bulgaria, during the campaign, and was not one that he had taken with

60 Morris, ‘Succession and usurpation’, 209.

61 That type of *Quellenforschung* is less popular now. See, e.g. Sacks, *Diodorus*; Holmes, *Basil II*, on Skylitzes. The earlier passages in Leon are *History* 4.3, 5.6.

62 Leon, *History* 9.11; see below for the description of Svjetoslav.

63 Leon, *History* 9.12; Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 18 (p. 310), whence the quotation.

64 B. V. Pentcheva, *Icons and power: the Mother of God in Byzantium* (University Park, PA 2006), passim, esp. 345, 534.

him from the capital. It was almost certainly captured at Preslav, where the Bulgarian royal family was captured. Skylitzes says nothing about its origin, but adds that Tzimiskes placed it in the chariot 'as a protector of the city (ὡς πολιούχος)', i.e. of Constantinople. The two accounts are complementary, not contradictory, and there is no reason to believe that the *poliouchos* detail was invented later or came from any other source.⁶⁵ This is another case of Leon and Skylitzes highlighting different aspects of the original source. Relics had previously been captured in war and moved to the capital, e.g. the *mandylion* of Christ taken from Edessa by Kourkouas in 944 A.D (to cite only a recent example).⁶⁶ This icon played a prominent role in the climax of the narrative in the original source, and the reference in Leon suggests that its origin had been explained in the narration of the campaign, although Leon omitted that part of the story. Neither he nor Skylitzes recount its capture. Skylitzes does mention the capture of the royal insignia at Preslav;⁶⁷ presumably the icon was taken there as well. Was there a narrative behind its capture? How might our author have interpreted its transfer from Bulgaria to Constantinople?

Our author's account of Tzimiskes' triumph was based on Plutarch's account of Camillus' triumph for the capture of Veii after a long siege. If we go to that account and turn back one page – in a Byzantine manuscript it would have been on the same page – we find the famous *evocatio* of Juno, the Roman ritual by which a deity of a conquered city, who was also worshipped by the Romans, was asked to consent to being transferred to Rome in order to be worshipped there. This episode in Roman history was the most famous for *evocatio*, as Camillus' triumph was crucial for later Roman triumphal tradition.⁶⁸

After he had captured the city he decided to transfer the statue of Hera to Rome, as he had vowed. When the craftsmen had gathered to do this and he was sacrificing and praying to the goddess that she accept their zeal to have her and to dwell in harmony and good will with the other gods in Rome, they say that the statue spoke in a low voice, saying that she willingly consented. But Livius says that Camillus made his prayer while touching the goddess and beseeching her, but that one of those present gave her answer, namely that she willingly consented and would follow them gladly.⁶⁹

65 As Pentcheva, *Icons and power*, implies.

66 A. Cameron, 'The history of the image of Edessa: the telling of a story,' *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983) 80–94.

67 Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 9 (p. 297).

68 Östenberg, *Staging the World*, 208 n. 77.

69 Plutarch, *Camillus* 6; cf. Livius 5.22; Dionysios, *Roman Antiquities* 13.3.3. See, in general, V. Basanoff, *Evocatio: Étude d'un rituel militaire romain* (Paris 1947); A. Blomart, 'Die Evocatio und der Transfer "fremder" Götter von der Peripherie nach Rom', in H. Cancik and J. Rüpke, (eds), *Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion* (Tübingen 1997) 99–111; G. Gustafsson, *Evocation deorum: historical and mythical interpretations of ritualised conquests* (Uppsala 2000).

This was probably the best account of an *evocatio* that would have been available in Byzantium in this period. My suggestion is that the original account of the 971 AD campaign contained a report of the capture of the icon that was later featured in the triumph, narrating an 'evocative' moment in which the Theotokos authorized her champion Tzimiskes to move her icon from Preslav after the siege. Our text developed the emperor's relationship with the Theotokos, and her transfer from Bulgaria to the New Rome, to be adored as the City's *poliouchos*. Therefore, it is possible that a Christian version of the ancient *evocatio* was acted out in the original account of Tzimiskes' victory at Preslav, which both Leon and Skylitzes chose to omit. I am not suggesting that anyone performed an *evocatio*, but only that the literary account of the campaign may have taken another page from its ancient sources and reshaped it accordingly.

Specifically, the statue of Hera (Juno) seems to have played no part in Camillus' triumph, whether as a captive or a patron of the conqueror, despite the close succession of *evocatio* and triumph in Plutarch's account. *Evocatio* was not associated with the triumph, while the statues of the gods were treated as captured items, not as statues of the gods. The Romans did not triumph over their enemies' gods, who were also their own;⁷⁰ nor, on the other hand, did their generals yield place of honour to an image of a divine patron, as Tzimiskes did. Placing the holy icon in the chariot was an innovation in the history of the Roman triumph and the ceremonial life of Constantinople, which the classicism of our text cannot disguise. Nevertheless, Tzimiskes' behaviour was fully in accordance with Roman norms in that he felt the need to humble himself at the very moment of his greatest glory. Ancient Romans had felt the same need, as exemplified in the belief that a slave stood behind the triumphator, reminding him that he was only mortal.⁷¹

The original source may have been partly structured around the relationship between Tzimiskes and the Theotokos and this point is raised by a passage in both Leon and Skylitzes that immediately follows St Theodoros' intervention in the battle.

In Byzantium, a virgin dedicated to God [a nun] thought that she saw in a dream the Mother of God, escorted by men in the form of flames [probably angels]. And she said to them, 'Summon for me the martyr Theodoros for me'; and immediately there appeared a brave young man in armor. And the Mother of God said to him, 'Lord Theodoros, your Ioannes, who is fighting the Skythians at Dorostolon, is now in difficult straits. Make haste to help him.'⁷²

This suggests a supernatural metanarrative running through the text, one of which Leon and Skylitzes have preserved traces. However, we cannot know whether the Theotokos, who appeared in this dream-vision, had anything to do with the one focalized by

70 Östenberg, *Staging the world*, 79–90 (esp. 90) and 270–2.

71 For a sceptical reading, see M. Beard, *The Roman triumph* (Cambridge, MA 2007) 85–92. For the evolution of the Byzantine triumph, see McCormick, *Eternal victory*, 131–230.

72 Leon, *History* 9.9, tr. Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon*, 197–8; also in Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 17 (pp. 308–9).

the icon that Tzimiskes brought back. Are we dealing with traces of a single narrative relationship here or separate episodes?⁷³ It is not possible to answer this question with certainty.

Tzimiskes' ceremonial innovations or, more correctly, their representation in our lost source, were revived by emperors and historians two centuries later. I am referring to the appearance of the Theotokos in a dream before or during a battle and the showcasing of her icon at a triumph. Both Ioannes II Komnenos (in 1133 AD) and Manuel I Komnenos (1167 AD) held triumphs with an icon in pride of place.⁷⁴ In his account of the defeat of Manuel at Myriokephalon in 1176 AD, Choniates reverses the dream-appearance that had led to the intervention of St Theodoros. As he set out on campaign, Manuel was approached by a man who

had dreamed that he entered a church ... and heard a voice coming from the icon of the Mother of God saying, 'The emperor is now in the utmost danger,' and 'Who will go forth in my name to assist him?' The voice of one unseen answered, 'Let Georgios go.' 'He is too lazy,' came the reply. 'Let Theodoros set forth,' then suggested the voice, but he was also rejected; finally came the painful response that no one would avert the impending evil.⁷⁵

A narrative of defeat was now being crafted out of the same elements that had once made a narrative of victory. The Theotokos is again powerless in herself to intervene here, but, in the tragicomic style of Choniates, her lieutenants are too lazy to do her bidding.⁷⁶

Our lost source was triumphant and its cast of characters reinforced that message, including the Theotokos, the Byzantine bringer of military victories, with whom the emperor had a close relationship, and also the brave young man Theodosios Mesonyktes, who was the first to mount the walls of Preslav, striking enemies left and right.⁷⁷ In ancient times, this would have earned him a *corona muralis*, given to the first man over the walls and worn at the ensuing triumph.⁷⁸ We have no reason to think that this decoration, or anything similar, was routinely (or ever) awarded in the Byzantine armies. However, Leon and Skylitzes emphasize that he was the one who climbed up

73 For the Theotokos on Tzimiskes' coins, see A. W. Carr, 'The Mother of God in public,' in M. Vassilaki, (ed.), *Mother of God: representations of the Virgin in Byzantine art* (Milan and Athens 2000) 324–37, here 326; Pentcheva, *Icons and power*, 34–5.

74 Niketas Choniates, *History* 19, 158; ed. I. A. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* (Berlin and New York 1975).

75 Niketas Choniates, *History* 190–1; tr. H. J. Magoulias, *O city of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates* (Detroit 1984) 107–8, modified. Pentcheva, *Icons and power*, 69 notes that the Mother of God manifests her power through an icon this time (still in the dream however).

76 For such tragicomedy in Choniates, see A. Kaldellis, 'Paradox, reversal and the meaning of history,' in A. Simpson and S. Efthymiades, (eds), *Niketas Choniates: a historian and a writer* (Geneva 2009) 75–99.

77 Leon, *History* 8.6; Skylitzes, *Synopsis: Tzimiskes* 9 (pp. 296–7), here unnamed.

78 V. A. Maxfield, *The military decorations of the Roman army* (London 1981) 76–9; Östenberg, *Staging the world*, 204, for the triumphal aspect.

first, which means that their source highlighted his feat in its narrative logic. Even the appearance of Svjetoslav reinforced the triumphal aspect of the text. The *ekphrasis* of him is the most detailed of a foreigner in Byzantine literature since late antiquity, and there would be nothing like it until Anna's account of Robert and Bohemond.⁷⁹ His actions conform to a consistently bellicose and savage, but not dishonourable model, and a detailed *ekphrasis* of his appearance is given at the end, when he agrees to terms.⁸⁰ The appearance of the conquered enemy at the end reflects the symbolic logic of the Roman triumph. Ancient accounts featured the defeated king in their representation of victory.⁸¹ Captives were still paraded in Byzantine triumphs (the Bulgarian royal family in that of Tzimiskes).⁸² The text is making up for the absence of the vanquished enemy here.

In conclusion, it is worth noting how many literary innovations this lost work made by its decision to cast the emperor's triumph in a Roman mould. It was the first Byzantine text to revive classical ethnography in describing the customs of the Rus' in a curious but not defensive manner; to provide an *ekphrasis* of a non-Byzantine leader; to allow him to speak in direct discourse, and to speak well, in a way that does him no dishonour. It provided the most detailed, almost classical, accounts of warfare that Byzantine historiography had yet seen, surely rivalling and surpassing Theodosios' *Capture of Crete*, a text to which it may have been directly responding. It also made a crucial contribution to the militarization and heroization of the imperial office and the aristocracy. By referring back to Camillus, lake Regillus, and other Roman antiquities, it offered new models for thinking about the Byzantine triumph, and about the intercession of Christian military saints on the field of battle, that were read and followed by later emperors and historians. In all, this was no small accomplishment for what was probably a relatively short text.

79 See, in general, J. N. Ljubarskij, 'Man in Byzantine historiography from John Malalas to Michael Psellos', *DOP* 46 (1992) 177–86.

80 Leon, *History* 9.11.

81 Östenberg, *Staging the world*, 130–5.

82 In general, see Rance, 'The date of the military compendium', 708.

At the origins of *ephoreia**

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Ephoreia, one of the principal forms of monastic trusteeship in the Byzantine empire, appears for the first time in texts around the year 1000. Despite its prevalence, like many post-Justinianic legal developments, ephoreia is not mentioned in the normative legal codes of the Middle Byzantine period, including the Basilika. A previously overlooked passage from the eleventh-century casebook known as the Peira, which was compiled by an anonymous redactor from the verdicts and legal treatises of the jurist Eustathios Rhomaïos, mentions ephoreia in the context of how much time must elapse before a possessor of property acquires ownership. This mention of ephoreia in the Peira is one of the earliest, if not the earliest, appearance of the term as describing monastic trusteeship. The reference is an important example of a contemporary legal development without a basis in Roman law which was accommodated within the contemporary legal regime.

In spite of its quasi-perfection, Roman law was antiquated; its application upon this boiling society could not but create problems, as it did not take into consideration the new realities. The flexible court of the hippodrome was the place where the necessary adjustments could be made. The existing law was applied, but sometimes it was also twisted or even ignored in order to take into consideration specific situations, specific interests, specific pressures.¹

Above is Nicholas Oikonomides' famous evaluation of the jurisprudence of the eleventh-century jurist Eustathios Rhomaïos as reflected in the so-called *Peira*.² Oikonomides' remark encapsulates one of the essential conundrums of Byzantine law: how did a society governed by a legal regime composed within the context of Justinian I's reign (r. 527–65) adapt to the radically different socio-economic conditions of later periods?

* I would like to thank John Haldon for looking over an early draft of this article. I am indebted as well to the invaluable criticism of the anonymous reviewers. At a crucial point in the writing of this article, Athanasia Katsiakiori–Rankl brought my attention to the Late Antique use of the term *ephoreia*.

1 N. Oikonomides, 'The "Peira" of Eustathios Rhomaïos. An abortive attempt to innovate in Byzantine law', *Fontes Minores* 7 (1986) 169–92, 191.

2 *Practica ex actis Eustathii Romani*, in C. E. Zachariä von Lingenthal (ed.), *Jus graeco-romanum*, 4 vols, (Leipzig 1856–65), I (1856). Zachariä's edition is reprinted in *JGR* IV, 7–260.

After all, the *Peira* itself demonstrates a system of jurisprudence which was, despite the influence of Orthodox Christian precepts like *oikonomia* and *philanthropia*,³ based on Roman law, or more precisely the recapitulation of Justinianic law promulgated by the first Macedonian emperors.⁴ Although the implementation of more recent imperial legislation, like the novels directed against the predatory land acquisitions of the *dynatoi* ('powerful'), is reflected in the *Peira*,⁵ Justinianic law remained the legal framework for Middle Byzantine society. Oikonomides' conclusion was that the anonymous compiler of the *Peira* intended Eustathios' rulings to constitute new legal norms more reflective of an eleventh-century milieu.

This problem of the disparity between law as it is presented in the official legal regime and law as it is actually practiced in society, 'the law in books' versus 'the law in action', is of course not unique to the Byzantine context, but it has nonetheless been the subject of much debate within Byzantine studies. Some thirty years ago, Alexander Kazhdan expressed sentiments very similar to those of Oikonomides in his call for a new history of Byzantine law, in which he underlined the need to examine the reality of law on the ground, hidden as it was beneath the façade of Roman law in its Justinianic iteration.⁶ In fact his proposed new history of Byzantine law would have been a history of legal institutions very much along the lines of Max Kaser's *Das römische Privatrecht*.⁷ The various responses to Kazhdan's proposal took issue with the way he characterized the work of legal historians and with his dichotomy of 'the law in books' versus 'the law in action', while at the same questioning whether Kazhdan's proposed *Institutionengeschichte* was in fact feasible.⁸ In another response to Kazhdan, Bernard Stolte rightfully pointed out that the discrepancy between 'the law in books' and 'the law in action' is in fact an inherent tendency of all polities which employ a civil-law legal system – in this respect a Middle Byzantine jurist employing Greek paraphrases of the *Corpus Juris Civilis* does not differ from a contemporary French lawyer consulting the *Code Napoléon*.⁹

This article is intended as a contribution to the discussion outlined above by examining how a form of monastic trusteeship with no basis in Roman law, *ephoreia*, was

3 D. Simon, *Rechtsfindung am byzantinischen Reichsgericht* (Frankfurt 1973).

4 The references to the *Basilika* in the *Peira* were most likely added by the work's anonymous redactor, who composed the work from Eustathios Rhomaïos' *oeuvre*, consisting of close to three hundred *hypomnēmata* ('verdicts') as well as legal treatises devoted to special subjects (*meletai*): see D. Simon, 'Peira' in *ODB*.

5 *Peira* §9.

6 A. Kazhdan, 'Do we need a new history of Byzantine law?', *JÖB* 39 (1989) 1–28. Kazhdan had published a variation of this proposal a year earlier, but this essay did not have the same impact as 'Do we need a new history of Byzantine law?'; see *idem*, 'Che cosa chiede lo storico di Bisanzio allo storico del dritto?', *Koivōvía* 12 (1988) 129–44.

7 M. Kaser, *Das römische Privatrecht*, 2nd ed., 2 vols (Munich 1971–75).

8 L. Burgmann, 'Ansinnen an byzantinische Rechtshistoriker', *Rechtshistorisches Journal* 10 (1991) 193–200, here 198–200; D. Simon, 'Wozu?', *Fontes Minores* 11 (2005) 1–4.

9 B. Stolte, 'Not new but novel. Notes on the historiography of Byzantine law', *BMGS* 22 (1998) 264–79, here 269–72.

treated by the Middle Byzantine jurist Eustathios Rhomaïos. This important post-Justinianic legal development is not mentioned in the *Basilika* or in any of the other Middle Byzantine redactions of Roman law, but nonetheless appears in the *Peira*. This citation from the *Peira* is probably one of the earliest references to *ephoreia* as a form of monastic trusteeship, as Eustathios' activity as a judge spanned the last quarter of the tenth and first two quarters of the eleventh century.¹⁰ To my knowledge, this reference has not been cited in any of the relevant literature on the origins of *ephoreia*. This *Peira* passage allows a re-evaluation of the origins of *ephoreia* and also permits other presumed references to *ephoreia* to be reinterpreted.

Ephoreia, a form of monastic trusteeship whereby a person designated as an *ephoros* assumed ownership (*kyriotes*) of a monastery and acted as its lay protector, is a term of uncertain origins.¹¹ In antiquity, the term *ephoros* designated one of Sparta's principal offices.¹² The word *ephoros* does not appear in the *Corpus Juris Civilis*; forms of the verb *ἐπιφορᾶω* appear twice in the *Novels* but are used in a general way.¹³ In Late Antiquity, *ephoreia* was used as a term for diocese.¹⁴ The term was used in the same way in the ninth and tenth centuries. *Ephoreia* in this sense is found in a redaction of the *Notitiae episcopatum* probably stemming from the patriarchate (901–7, 912–25) of Nicholas I Mystikos.¹⁵ In his lexicon, Photios gives both the ancient meanings of the word as well as the meaning *episkope*.¹⁶

According to the most recent survey of the development of *ephoreia*, the first descriptions of *ephoroi* (although the term is often not explicitly used), along with the accompanying arrangement of *ephoreia*, do not appear in texts until the very end of the tenth century.¹⁷ Lead seals, which are generally of great value in determining administrative developments, are not applicable to the study of *ephoreia* as a form of monastic trusteeship, as the few surviving seals which mention *ephoroi* refer to high-ranking imperial

10 Unfortunately, given the loosely-thematic way the *Peira* was organized by its anonymous redactor, there is no way to date the passage under question more precisely, given that the markers which sometimes allow a more precise dating such as names which might suggest a date via prosopography or a title of Eustathios Rhomaïos at a particular point in his career are in this instance absent.

11 See C. Galatariotou, 'Byzantine ktetorika typika : a comparative study', *REB* 45 (1987) 77–138, esp. 101–6, 113–6; E. Herman, 'Charistikaies', in R. Naz (ed.), *Dictionnaire de droit canonique*, 7 vols, III (Paris 1935–65) cols. 611–7, esp. 616; *idem*, 'Ricerche sulle istituzioni monastiche bizantine: Typika ktetorika, caristicari e monasteri 'liberi'', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 6 (1940) 293–375, esp. 335–9; J. P. Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C. 1987) 218–20.

12 See P. A. Cartledge, 'Ephors' in S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn (Oxford 2005).

13 Nov. 46, §1; Nov. 101, preface.

14 *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G.W.H. Lampe (Oxford 1961), 588.

15 *Notitia* 7, preface, line 9 in J. Darrouzès, *Notitiae episcopatum Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (Paris 1981).

16 *Photii Patriarchae Lexicon*, 2 vols, ed. C. Theodoridis, II (Berlin 1982) 231.

17 J. Thomas and A. Constantides Hero (eds), *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, 5 vols, I (Washington, D.C. 2000) 295–309.

administrators, often with judicial roles.¹⁸ In the testament (*diatheke*) of Nikon Metanoeite, written after 997, Nikon entrusts the guardianship of his foundation to both the thematic judge (*krites*) and military governor (*strategos*) of the Peloponnese.¹⁹ The relationship as described in the text corresponds to *ephoreia*, although it must be emphasized that the thematic judge and military governor are not described as *ephoroi*.²⁰ Although the textual tradition of the testament of Nikon Metanoeite is problematic, since the one manuscript containing the text has been lost, the strategy of appealing to the thematic judge and the military governor as protectors of a foundation is mirrored by an (also now-lost) inscription for the monastery of *Nea Gephyra*, also in the Peloponnese, which is dated to 1 May 1027, as well as *Peira* §43.5, discussed below.²¹ Given how closely the arrangement of trusteeship in the testament of Nikon Metanoeite matches the arrangement in the inscription for *Nea Gephyra*, there are good grounds for accepting the description of trusteeship in the former as genuine; if this part of the text is a later interpolation, it is one which exactly mirrors contemporary trusteeship arrangements. Moreover, appointing a thematic judge and military governor as protectors of a foundation made excellent sense given the tenth- or eleventh-century administrative context, as the two officials constituted respectively the most powerful civil and military official within a theme. Rosemary Morris has suggested that originally an *ephoros* might have been an overseer of monastic lands, as the first generally-recognized reference to *ephoroi* (although again it must be emphasized that the term *ephoros* is not used) in the aforementioned Life of Nikon Metanoeite shows them receiving payment in kind for their services.²²

However, it is argued in this article that these instances of trusteeship as described in the testament of Nikon Metanoeite and *Nea Gephyra* denoted a more general form of trusteeship, that of the *epitropos*, rather than what was originally a form of trusteeship

18 A. Kazhdan, A.-M. Talbot, 'Ephoros', *ODB* I, 707–8. Examples of high-ranking *ephoroi* include no. 309 in V. Laurent, *Documents de sigillographie byzantine: la collection C. Orghidian* (Paris 1952) and LXVIII–15 (M-8043) in N.P. Likhachev, *Molvdovuly grecheskogo vostoka : k XVIII Mezhdunarodnomu Kongressu Vizantinistov* (Moskva, 8–15 avgusta 1991 g.) (Moscow 1991).

19 S. P. Lampros, 'Ο Βίος τοῦ Νίκωνος τοῦ Μετανοεῖτε', *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων* 3 (1906) 129–228, 223–8. Newer edition of the testament along with a Latin translation in O. Lampsides, *Ὁ ἐκ Πόντου Ὅσιος Νίκων ὁ Μετανοεῖτε* (Athens 1982) 252–6. The most recent edition of Nikon's life in D. F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon* (Brookline, MA 1987) does not include the testament.

20 The life says that Nikon wanted the thematic judge and the military governor to own (νὰ τὴν ἐξουσιάζῃ) his church.

21 D. Feissel and A. Philippidis-Braat, 'Inventaries en vue d'un recueil des inscriptions historiques de Byzance. III. Inscriptions du Péloponnèse (à l'exception de Mistra)', *TM* 9 (1985) 267–396, text at 301–2. The *krites* and *strategos*, along with the emperor, are invoked as a counterweight to the power of the bishop: ἐν πρώτης μὲν βασιλείας τὸ αὐτεξούσιον, ἐπισκέπτεσθε δὲ αὐτὴν κ(αὶ) ἐπιμελήσθε παρὰ τοῦ κρητοῦ κὲ {σ} στρατηγοῦ, τοὺς πράτουντα(ς) ἰς τὸ θέμαν, κὲ μὴ ἔαν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον(ον) τῆς αὐτῆς πόλ(εως) ἅμα κὲ τοῦ κ(λ)ήρου αὐτοῦ ἐπεξουσιάζῃν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ μῆτε βῆμα ποδὸς (ll. 16–22).

22 R. Morris, 'Legal terminology in monastic documents of the tenth and eleventh centuries', *JÖB* 32/2 (1982) 281–90, 286; *eadem*, *Monks and laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge 1995) 159.

reserved exclusively for churchmen, that of the *ephoros*. This distinction can be made on the basis of two passages in the *Peira*: §8.5, which mentions *ephoreia*, and §43.5, which describes a bequest in a will to a *krites*. The text and a translation of *Peira* §8.5 are as follows:

Ὅτι εἰ μὲν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν μέρος τι κατάσχω, διὰ τεσσαρακονταετίας δεσπόζω αὐτοῦ. εἰ δὲ τὸ μοναστήριον ἦτο ὅλον, οὐδέποτε δύναμαι κτήσασθαι. οὐδὲ γὰρ βοηθεῖ μοι χρόνος οὐδὲ εἷς, διὰ τὸ τὸν νόμον ῥητῶς ἀποφαίνεσθαι τὰ ῥελογιόσα καὶ τὰ σάκτα [leg. σάνκτα] καὶ τὰ σάκρα μὴ διὰ χρόνου δεσπόζεσθαι. καὶ τοῦτο φανερόν ἐστιν· ὁ γὰρ ιδιώτης μέρους μὲν ἐκκλησίας δρασσόμενος ἀνάρχως δεσπόζει τοῦτου διὰ χρόνου, ὡς εἴρηται· τὴν δὲ ὅλην ἐκκλησίαν κατασχὼν οὐ δεσπόσει ταύτης ποτέ· οὐ γὰρ ἔχει δίκαια ἐφορίας· τοῦτο γὰρ τῶν ιερῶν ἐστίν. εἰ μέντοι ἐπίσκοπος ἐκκλησίαν ἢ μοναστήριον ἐτέρου ἐπισκόπου κατάσχοι, διὰ τριακονταετίας ἀναμφιβόλως δεσπόσει τοῦτου. ὥσανεὶ γὰρ ἀπὸ ιερῆος εἰς ιερέα μετηνέχθη τὸν δυνάμενον ἐφορᾶν αὐτό.

If I possess part of a church property, I become the owner of it after a forty-year period. And if it is a whole monastery, I am never able to own it. Not even one year helps me [in acquiring ownership], since the law specifically declares that religious things, both *sancta* and *sacra*, cannot be owned after a period of time. This is clear. For a private citizen [who has acquired a church property] seizing it without authorization becomes the owner of it after a period of time, as has been said, but should he take possession of an entire church he shall not ever own it. For he does not have the right of *ephoria*.²³ For this is [a thing] of priests. If however a bishop should possess a church or monastery of another bishop, he would own it without contestation after a thirty-year period. For, as it were, the power of overseeing (*ephoran*) was transferred from one priest to another.

This passage is found in a section on how much time needed to elapse before a possessor of a property became its owner. In Roman law there existed a clear distinction between possession (Lat. *possessio*, Gr. *nome*, *katoche*) and ownership (Lat. *dominium*, Gr. *despoteia*),²⁴ which at a theoretical level was maintained throughout the Byzantine period. However, at the same time, terms for possession and ownership were often used interchangeably in certain legal documents, like monastic charters.²⁵ Ownership gave the owner nearly unlimited rights to alienate his property, for instance by gift, sale, or bequest. In the Justinianic iteration of Byzantine law, a long-term possessor of something could acquire ownership by means of the *praescriptio longi temporis* (ἡ τοῦ

23 Both spellings (ἐφορεία and ἐφορία) are used in contemporary texts to describe the legal relationship of *ephoreia*, although of course ἐφορεία is much more common.

24 M. Kaser, *Eigentum und Besitz im älteren römischen Recht*, 2nd ed. (Cologne 1956). For the Byzantine period, see K. E. Zachariä von Lingenthal, *Geschichte des griechisch-römischen Rechts*, 3rd edition (Berlin 1892) 211–17.

25 Examples in Kazhdan, ‘Do we need a new history of Byzantine law?’ 19–21.

μακροῦ χρόνου παραγραφῇ).²⁶ Although in classical Roman law the *praescriptio longi temporis* was employed by a possessor against a plaintiff who demanded the return of his property after the legal duration of time, in the *Corpus Juris Civilis* it allowed the possessor of something to gain ownership after a set period of time. The possessor utilizing the *praescriptio longi temporis* had to do so in good faith, so that he considered himself the rightful owner, and he had to have acquired possession lawfully. The length of time needed to acquire ownership varied according to the type of property which was being acquired by the possessor. According to *Basilika*²⁷ 5.2.14²⁸ and 5.3.7,²⁹ the possessor of church or monastic property (but not property which included an actual church or monastery) thus gained ownership at the end of forty years.

Peira §8.5 is therefore a consideration of how the *praescriptio longi temporis* applied to church or monastic property. While a private individual could use the *praescriptio longi temporis* to acquire ownership of church property after he had been the possessor of the said property for forty years, he could never own property that was a church or a monastery in the same way. In contrast to later forms of *ephoreia*, in which an *ephoros* could be a layman or churchman, Eustathios specifically defines *ephoreia* as ‘a [thing] of priests (τοῦτο γὰρ τῶν ἱερέων ἐστίν).’ *Ephoreia* thus constituted an exception to the rule that the *praescriptio longi temporis* did not apply to possessors of actual churches or monasteries. If a bishop held *ephoreia* over a monastery or church which belonged to another bishop, then ‘as it were the power of overseeing (*ephoran*) was transferred from one priest to another.’ The passage implies that *ephoreia* meant ownership (*despoteia*) of the property: that is, the *ephoros* had full power to alienate the property under his supervision.

The interpretation of the passage hinges upon whether this mention of *ephoreia* is a more general type of supervision or whether it describes the form of monastic trusteeship with which it was later connected. The two aforementioned options are not by necessity mutually exclusive, and could instead reflect an intermediate phase whereby the term which designated a bishop’s supervisory authority over the churches and monasteries

26 D. Nörr, *Die Entstehung der longi temporis praescriptio: Studien zum Einfluss der Zeit im Recht und zur Rechtspolitik in der Kaiserzeit* (Cologne 1969).

27 *Basilicorum libri LX*, ed. H. J. Scheltema and N. van der Wal, 17 vols (Series A = Text, 8 vols; Series B = Scholia, 9 vols) (Groningen 1953–88).

28 = *Nov.* 111: ‘Every action pertaining to a reverend house, whether it is personal or for a pledge, may not exceed forty years, while the temporary regulations that are fitting to each such holy house maintain however their own intervals.’ (Πᾶσα ἀγωγή προσήκουσα σεπτῷ οἴκῳ, εἴτε προσωπική εἴτε ὑποθηκαρία ἐστίν, οὐχ ὑπερβαίνει τὰ τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη, τῶν ἀρμοζουσῶν ἐκάστῳ οἴκῳ τοιούτῳ εὐαγεί προσκαίρων παραγραφῶν φυλαττουσῶν μέντοιγε τοὺς οἰκείους χρόνους.)

29 = *Nov.* 131 c. 6: ‘Instead of the lengths of time of 10 and 20 and 30 years for holy churches and all other reverend places we decree to put in its place only a regulation of 40 years. This is also kept for the request of bequests and inheritances left to philanthropic institutions.’ (Ἀντὶ δὲ τῶν χρονίων παραγραφῶν τῶν δέκα καὶ εἴκοσι καὶ τριάκοντα ἐνιαυτῶν ταῖς ἀγίαις ἐκκλησίαις καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀπασι σεβασμίῳις τόποις μόνην τὴν τῶν τεσσαράκοντα ἐνιαυτῶν παραγραφὴν ἀντιτίθεσθαι προστάττομεν· τοῦτου αὐτοῦ φυλαττομένου καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀπαίτησει τῶν ληγάτων καὶ τῶν κληρονομιῶν τῶν εἰς εὐσεβεῖς αἰτίας καταλελειμμένων.)

within his jurisdiction began to indicate the trusteeship of a bishop over independent religious houses. Incidentally, this interpretation of *ephoreia* would dovetail nicely with the changing meaning of the word from Late Antiquity – during which time it often meant ‘diocese’ – through the eleventh century, by the middle of which it denoted a form of monastic trusteeship.

Considering that Eustathios’ activity as a judge started in the late tenth century, *Peira* §8.5 is one of the earliest, if not the earliest, mention of *ephoreia* as a form of monastic trusteeship. It is necessary now to return to Rosemary Morris’ suggestion, mentioned earlier, as to the difference between an *ephoros* and an *epitropos*. According to Morris, while the two trustees were similar in many respects, an *epitropos* seems to have held a spiritual authority while the *ephoros* was more associated with a monastery’s landed assets.³⁰ This hypothesis likewise fits the *Peira* passage, as it is after all a discussion of landed assets in which *ephoreia* happens to appear. However, a second *Peira* passage, §43.5, gives evidence as to how, at least as late as the end of the tenth and beginning of the eleventh century, *ephoreia* was differentiated from a more general form of ‘trusteeship’, *epitrope*. The text and a translation of *Peira* §43.5 are given below:

‘Ὅτι ἐν μεσοποταμίᾳ ἔγραψε τις διαθήκην, καὶ προσεγράψατο αὐτῇ περὶ λεγάτου ῥητῶς οὕτως· ἀφίημι τῷ αὐθέντῃ μου τῷ κριτῇ λεγάτον τόσων νομισμάτων. ἔτι ζῶντος τοῦ διαθεμένου διεδέχθη ὁ κριτής, καὶ προεβλήθη ἕτερος. ἐτελεύτησεν ὁ διαθεμένος, καὶ πρὸ τῆς ἀνοιξέως τῆς διαθήκης ὁ κριτής ἔλαβε τὸ λεγάτον. διεδέχθη καὶ οὗτος, καὶ προεβλήθη ἕτερος, ὅς καὶ τὴν ἀνοιξιν τῆς διαθήκης καὶ τὴν ἀπογραφὴν τῆς ὑποστάσεως ἐποιήσατο· καὶ ἔλαβε καὶ οὗτος τὸ λεγάτον. κατεγκαλούμενοι τοίνυν ἀπὸ τῶν κληρονόμων οἱ δύο κριταὶ ὡς δύο λεγάτα ἀπαιτήσαντες, ὁ μὲν εἰς ἔλεγεν, ὅτι ἐμοὶ κατελείφθη τὸ λεγάτον· ἐγὼ γὰρ εὐρέθην ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τῆς τελευτῆς αὐτοῦ· ὁ δὲ ἕτερος ἀντέλεγεν, ὅτι μᾶλλον ἐγὼ ἥνοιξα τὴν διαθήκην καὶ τὴν ἀπογραφὴν ἐποιησάμην, καὶ καλῶς ἔλαβον τὸ λεγάτον. καὶ ἦν τοιαῦτα ζητήματα. ἠρώτησα ἐγὼ τὸν μάγιστρον, καὶ εἶπεν οὕτως· ὅτι ὁ διαθεμένος δοκεῖ τῷ κριτῇ τοῦ θέματος ἀφεῖναι τὸ λεγάτον τῷ εὐρισκομένῳ μετὰ τελευτὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ τῆς ὑπάρξεως διενεργοῦντι· ἐπεὶ γὰρ οὐ προσέθηκεν ὄνομα ῥητῶς τοῦ κριτοῦ, αὕτη ἡ ἔννοια δίδοται ἡμῖν. ἀλλ’ ὀφείλομεν σκοπεῖν καὶ τὸν κριτὴν τὸν ἐν τῇ ποιήσει τῆς διαθήκης ὄντα, πῶς εἶχε πρὸς αὐτὸν· εἰ γὰρ εὐρόμεν, ὅτι σχέσιν εἶχε πρὸς τοῦτον, καὶ ὑπισχνεῖτο πρὸς αὐτὸν περὶ λεγάτου ἢ περὶ ἐπιτρόπου, καὶ μετὰ τὴν διαδοχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐὰν προσήρχετο αὐτῷ καὶ περὶ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ ἐὰν ἐκοινοῦτο αὐτῷ, τότε ἐκ τούτων τῶν τεκμηρίων μᾶλλον ὁ κριτής ὁ ὢν. ἐν τῇ γραφῇ τοῦ λεγάτου καὶ τῷ καιρῷ τῆς ποιήσεως τῆς διαθήκης λαμβάνει τὸ λεγάτον.

Someone in Mesopotamia wrote a will, and he wrote in it concerning a bequest specifically thus: ‘I leave by my authority a sum of so many *nomismata* to the [the-matic] judge.’ While the testator was still living the judge ended his term in office, and another one was put forward. The testator died, and the [first] judge took the

30 Morris, *Monks and laymen*, 159.

bequest before the opening of the will. And he left office, and the other judge came, and he performed the opening of the will and the summary of the estate. And he [the second judge] took the bequest. However, the heirs brought suit, claiming that the two judges had requested two bequests, and the [first judge] said ‘the bequest was left to me. For I was in office at the time of his death.’ And the other replied, ‘But I opened the will and made the division [of the estate], so I was right to take the bequest.’ And such were the statements. And I asked the *magistros*, and he said the following: ‘The testator seems to have left the bequest to the thematic judge who was in office after his death and who disposed of his estate, since he did not specifically write down the name of the judge, which would indicate his intention to us. But we should examine the judge at the time of the making of the will, whether it was to him. For if we find that he disposed of it to him, and he made a promise to him about a bequest or trustee, and after his term of office if he came to him about the estate and if he shared it with him, then from this evidence the judge who is in the document of the bequest is the one at the time of the making of the will and he should receive the bequest’.

The above passage demonstrates that the arrangement of trusteeship described in the testament of Nikon Metanoëite and *Nea Gephyra*, whereby a testator invoked the aid of local officials to protect their foundations, was employed in other instances as well. The text gives no indication that this was anything other than a normal will; the mention of heirs (*kleronomoi*) makes it unlikely that the will served as a monastic charter like the testament of Nikon Metanoëite and *Nea Gephyra*. It is also important to note that Eustathios Rhomaïos, the *magistros* mentioned in the passage, deemed that the appropriate solution to this legal problem included asking the first judge as to whether there had been any sort of arrangement between the testator and the judge regarding a trustee (*epitropos*). *Peira* §43.5, the testament of Nikon Metanoëite and *Nea Gephyra* prove that in the late tenth and early eleventh century testators, monastic and otherwise, would appeal to and even include bequests to local officials (particularly, it seems, to the thematic judge) in order to execute and protect arrangements made by the testator. This arrangement is found as well in the will of Eustathios Boïlas, dated to the year 1059.³¹ Among those designated as executors (*epitropoi*) of his will Eustathios lists first of all Christ and the Virgin, but after them the *magistros* Basil and his brother Pharesmanes, and the bishop of the district (*enoria*). Thus Eustathios Boïlas names both specific individuals as well as the office of bishop, in much the same way the office of the *krites* and *strategos* is invoked in the other testaments already examined. As compensation for undertaking their duties the brothers Basil and Pharesmanes were to receive two or three *litrai* of gold, and the bishop six *nomismata* or a book. As in the case of the monastic foundations, gift-giving, in this case to the executors, ensures that the stipulations of the testator are

31 P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI^e siècle byzantin* (Paris 1977) 15–63.

followed. All of these examples corresponded to a more general form of trusteeship, *epitrope*, rather than *ephoreia*, as has been proposed at times.

In conclusion, it seems probable that two of the principal forms of monastic trusteeship in the Middle Byzantine period, *ephoreia* and *epitrope*, were initially differentiated based on the type of trustee. *Ephoreia* was granted to churchmen who oversaw the lands of other churchmen or monks, while *epitrope* was a more general form of trusteeship which was not restricted to churchmen. From a legal standpoint, the need for this distinction may have evolved due to the regulations, of which *Peira* §8.5 is an example, which prevented laymen from exercising certain actions in their capacity as trustees, such as acquiring ownership of actual churches or monasteries. Indeed, in the Middle Byzantine period, *epitrope* was a well-developed legal category which described the responsibilities of a guardian to his wards.³² Yet due to its origins as a Roman legal category, *epitrope* had never been envisioned as a legal institution for the trusteeship of religious foundations. *Ephoreia* in its original form nicely skirted these regulations by designating churchmen as trustees and by avoiding rules intended for guardians and their wards rather than trustees of religious foundations. This distinction, of course, did not survive very long, and eventually *ephoreia* came to denote a generic form of monastic trusteeship. This distinction had disappeared by the time the term *ephoreia* again appears in texts from the same period, first of all in a chrysobull of Constantine X Doukas dated to 1060.³³ This chrysobull is itself a confirmation of two earlier chrysobulls, the second of which was issued by Constantine IX Monomachos in 1052 and designated the *epi tou kanikleiou* as possessing the *ephoreia* over Lavra.³⁴ The earlier holder of this office, Nikephoros Ouranos, had been designated *epitropos* in the late tenth-century testament of Athanasios of Athos.³⁵ The reason why the holder of this same office came to be designated *ephoros* instead of *epitropos* is unclear, but this transformation does at least indicate that by the middle of the eleventh century the terms *ephoros* and *epitropos* had amalgamated to the point where they essentially meant the same thing. In his testament, which was written in 1077, Michael Attaleiates chose to appoint his son Theodore as *ephoros* of his foundation, and stipulated that the *ephoros* should remain one of his descendants.³⁶

The history of the development of *ephoreia* as a legal institution demonstrates that certain legal categories which did not originate in Roman law were nonetheless able to be accommodated within the contemporary legal regime. Nicholas Oikonomides, in his study of Eustathios Rhomaïos and the *Peira*, which was quoted at the beginning of this article, characterized Byzantine law in this period as antiquated, obsolete and

32 *Basilika*, books 37–8; A. Kazhdan, J. Herrin, ‘Guardianship’, *ODB* II, 886; Zachariä, *Geschichte des griechisch-römischen Rechts*, 120–9.

33 *Actes de Lavra*, ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, N. Svoronos, D. Papachryssanthou, 4 vols, I (Paris 1970–82) no. 33.

34 *Actes de Lavra*, I, no. 31.

35 Ph. Meyer, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster* (Leipzig 1894) 123–30, here §7.

36 P. Gautier, ‘La diataxis de Michel Attaliat’, *REB* 35 (1981) 5–143, lines 280–304, 348–53.

unable to deal with new economic and social realities. Eustathios Rhomaios was, for Oikonomides, a tragic figure, an innovator who attempted to provide through his rulings a rapprochement between Byzantine society and its legal regime, which in the end proved unsuccessful. However, this portrayal of Byzantine law presents a false dichotomy between legal antiquarianism and realism. As the development of *ephoreia* demonstrates, jurists were able to mediate between the two without great difficulty. Contemporary legal institutions could impinge upon the legal regime, while at the same time the legal regime affected the development of these new institutions.

The fair of Agios Demetrios of 26 October 1449: Byzantine-Venetian relations and land issues in mid-century*

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A unique document of 1451 written in political verse gives an account by an anonymous-Greek of his encounters with Byzantine and Venetian justice as the result of a small incident at the Nauplion fair of Agios Demetrios of 1449. Petitions from Argos and Nauplion to Venice in 1451 recount a similar incident at his same fair, and give a broader perspective of both events. Together the three documents produce a remarkable view of Nauplion and Argos intra-city hostilities and competition, social classes, and economics, and with the relationship of both with the Despotate of the Morea.

The incidents around the 1449 Nauplion fair of Agios Demetrios portray perfectly the complex web of social and political relationships that had been developing for years within the Venetian territories of Argos and Nauplion, and between them and the Despotate of the Morea.

At mid-century, the Morea was ruled by two despots under Constantinople. Demetrios Palaiologos controlled primarily the eastern and southern parts of the peninsula from Mistra, while his older brother Thomas controlled the Corinthia, the north and the west, moving his capital between Leondari and Patras.¹ Two comparatively small areas – the western half of the Argolid and the southern half of the Messenian peninsula – remained under the control of Venice. Since the late fourteenth century, Albanian immigration, and reproduction, had been so abundant that, by the time of the feast of Agios Demetrios in 1449, Albanians were as much as 60% of the population in some areas. The Albanian culture of clans migrating with their herds often came into conflict with the Veneto-Byzantine culture which depended on settled *paroikoi* – villeins – who worked assigned land. On the other hand, the political protection clans with their herds of

* I would like to thank Ersie Burke, Pierre MacKay, Nick Nicholas, and Michael Pettinger for their comments, and particularly the anonymous reviewer who made many helpful suggestions.

1 All non-Greek rule, with the exception of Venice, had been eliminated from the Morea by John, Constantine, and Thomas Palaiologos in 1428–29.

horses provided armed servitors for Byzantine *archons* and mounted soldiers for the Venetian territories.

Three documents, one Greek and two Venetian, carry the memory of the fair of Agios Demetrios of 1449 as a crisis point in relations with the Despotate. They portray territories under great economic and social stress, within themselves, with the Despotate of the Morea, among Greek, Venetian and Albanian subjects, and create a mosaic of information about the friable Moreote culture at the end of the Byzantine empire. Until the Greek document was published in 1998, the Agios Demetrios fair had not been known at Nauplion: a reference to it in a Venetian source had gone unobserved by several previous scholars who made use of the document. In fact, this is the only documentation for any fair at Nauplion until 1525.²

Two of the three documents discussed here specifically name the fair of Agios Demetrios of 1449 – τὸ πανηγύριον τοῦ Ναυπλίου τοῦ μέγα Δημητρίου, *la domenega di che fo ali fete Di[mi]tri*. The Greek document (Appendix 1) is an anonymous narrative, dated 22 March 1451, relating the injustices of the Venetian administrations of Nauplion and Argos, and the injustice of Demetrios Asan, κεφάλη, governor, of Mouchli. Taking the date of the complaint and the periods of time mentioned in it, one can date the fair to Sunday, 26 October 1449. The Venetian report of the fair (Appendix 2) is from a petition from Argos dated 20 July 1451, and the conjunction of *domenega* and *li fete Di[mi]tri* allows its fair to be identified with that of 1449 as well. The third document, a parallel petition from Nauplion, clarifies problems mentioned in the Argos petition.

The first narrative, ‘The complaint of the anonymous Naupliote’, was published in 1998 by Georgios Athanasios Choras in *Ναυπλιακά Ανάλεκτα*, a short-lived and difficult-to-find journal.³ There is no reason to doubt the date of 22 March 1451 given in the text. The complaint is written in demotic Greek political verse. The copyist has included accents and writes the western date in Greek numerals. Several phrasings and antitheses are typical of Greek folk-narratives – Ἄρχοντες καὶ ἀδελφοί, μικροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι; νὰ εἶχεν ἀστράψει ἡ Ἀνατολή, νὰ εἶχε βροντήσει <ἡ> Δύση, ἀπότες ἀναθράφημεν καὶ εἶδαμεν τὸν κόσμον, (εἶδαν κακὸν) ἀπὸ ἐκείνους καλὸν δὲν τοὺς ἐφάνη. Some Venetian terms are used – ποδεστάς – *podestà*, παλάτι – *palati*, ρετούρης – *rettor*, συντίκοι – *sindici* – but the Greek noun and verb forms are conventional. Two interesting formations come originally from Latin terms – συντιχάρη, παραγιζένοι.

The anonymous Greek complainer is writing from prison in Nauplion where he will be for a very long time. He addresses himself rhetorically to ‘*archons* and brothers’ – to his peers, and also to those, it will later appear, whose testimony put him in prison,

2 Mentions of *stato da mar* fairs are rare to non-existent. In 1525, Nicolò Justiniani described crossbow competitions at the fairs for Easter, the Feast of S. Marco, and Christmas. ASVe Relazioni, filza 61, ff 32–5. K. Sathas, *Μνημεῖα Ἑλληνικῆς ἱστορίας/Documents inédits relatifs à l’histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Âge* (Paris 1880–90) VI, 245. Modon had a fair of *Madonna santa Maria* on the beach at the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin in August. Sathas, *Μνημεῖα* IV, 27, for 6 November 1465.

3 G. Choras, ‘Αυτοβιογραφικὸ σιχοῦργημα Ναυπλιώτη (1451)’, *Ναυπλιακά Ανάλεκτα* III (1998) 348–63; Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1097, f. 290v–291r.

ending with a threat to these *archons*. He says that there was an incident at the fair of Agios Demetrios in which an Albanian named Spatharos was wounded (and died).⁴ Spatharos' brothers claimed that Anonymous, driven by jealousy, was responsible. The governor banned Anonymous from the territory, and the Albanians took advantage of the confusion to seize his animals which he had taken to sell at the fair. He went to Mouchli in the Despotate to complain to the governor, Asan, about the Albanians, who had come to the fair from the Despotate. Asan put him in prison and examined him under torture with the rope – *strappado* – over a period of four months.

Information on judicial process in the Despotate is nearly nonexistent, so this is of particular value. Whether Anonymous was of the torturable classes,⁵ or whether this was the Despotate's – or Asan's – normal practice with complainants,⁶ we do not know, although we can be sure he has not told us everything. At the end of the four months of Mouchli justice, Anonymous was sent back to Venetian territory with an armed guard and a writ of acquittal. Here he tries to assert his loyalty to Venice: 'Εγὼ δέ, διὰ τὸν τόπον μου καὶ διὰ τὴν Αὐθεντιάν μου, / ἠθέλησα πάλε νὰ ἐλθῶ εἰς τόπον τοῦ Ἀγίου Μάρκου ('I, for the sake of my land and my lord, wanted to return to the territory of S. Marco.') This brings the date to late February or early March.

Anonymous went to Venetian-held Argos⁷ where, because of jealousy on the part of the 'Christians,' he was again imprisoned, this time in a private home.⁸ After two and a half months – as the result of further unjust plotting against him – the Argos *podestà*⁹ wrote out an order to take him to Nauplion. This brings the date to the early summer of 1450.

4 The name, Spatharos, is known for the Argolid. D. Wright and J. Melville-Jones, *The Greek correspondence of Bartolomeo Minio. Vol. I: Dispacci from Nauplion, 1479–1483* (Padua 2008) 252, names an Andreas Spatharos as a *kapetanios* taking *stratioti* to Italy. For the name and variants, E. Trapp, *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* (Vienna 2001; hereafter, *PLP*) 26436–42.

5 'The torturable classes' is a phrase from Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana*. Roman law had categories of individuals for whom torture was required in giving testimony, although the classes are never perfectly defined and much depended on the individual judge. A. H. M. Jones, *The later Roman empire, 284–602* (Baltimore 1964) 1: 519. Also, J. Perkins, 'Early Christian and judicial bodies', in M. Th. Fögen and M. Lee (eds), *Bodies and boundaries in Graeco-Roman Antiquity* (Berlin 2009) 247–9.

6 A Venetian document of 1400 stipulates that letters be written to the lord of Mouchli, the despot, and the *podestà* of Nauplion, seeking the release of Nicolò Catello, who had been imprisoned when he went to Mouchli to inquire about payment for merchandise. Sathas, *Μνημεῖα* 1: #232 for 4 February 1400.

7 Argos and Nauplion are 8 miles apart, both a day's walk from Mouchli.

8 Private imprisonment seems to have been a normal feature of incarceration in the Morea. Sphrantzes was imprisoned in someone's grain storage tower (with mice and weevils) when he was captured at Patras. G. Sphrantzes, *Memorii, 1401–1477*, ed. V. Grecu, *Pseudo-Sphrantzes: Macarie Melissenos Cronica, 1258–1481* (Bucharest 1966) § XVII, 10.

9 The *podestà* was probably Nicolò Valier q. Paolo. *Rulers of Venice, 1332–1524: Interpretations, Methods, Database*, eds M. O'Connell, B. Kohl, et al. (ACLS Humanities E-Book 2009) q.v. Maps, Argos, records #20, #22. Also, *Chroniques Gréco-Romanes inédits ou peu connues* ed. C. Hopf (Berlin 1873) 382–3. The titles of *podestà*, *rettor*, and *provveditor* are used somewhat interchangeably for 'governor'.

In Nauplion, from which Anonymous had been banned the previous October, *podestà* Priam Contarini held a formal hearing on the case which involved witnesses and documents. Some of the witnesses against Anonymous are called ‘archons’, which means that they were Greek land-holders, and one begins to get the impression that the original incident must have been considerably more complex than he has said. As with the information about Asan’s justice, this document is the unique source for information about Venetian justice in Argos and Nauplion.

It is an article of faith that a governor of a Venetian *città* made judicial decisions with the aid of two patrician *consiglieri*, councillors, appointed from Venice.¹⁰ However, the anonymous complaint gives evidence for *ad hoc* solutions in showing Fra Nicolò, a Franciscan priest, and Marin Catello, a citizen of Nauplion, acting as *consiglieri* in this narrative.¹¹ Both men fit well into what is known about Nauplion: The Catello family, originally Apulian, had lived in Nauplion at least since before 1308. Names of the family, who came to be identified as Greek and Orthodox, and include a nun and a priest, have a disproportionate representation in the sparse survivals of documents concerning Nauplion residents.¹² As for Fra Nicolò, there was a small Franciscan friary in Nauplion and *città* governors were sometimes told to save money by making use of the local friars.¹³

During the hearing, Anonymous complained about the injustice of the people of Nauplion. The *consiglieri* told him he should make his complaint about the people of Nauplion to the *sindici*.¹⁴ That was when Anonymous made a big mistake. He muttered an obscenity in Greek: (καὶ) εἶπα ὅτι χέζω τοὺς ἐκείνους τοὺς Ναυπλιώτες (‘I said that I s**t on the Naupliotes.’) Or that is what he claimed he had said, but he obviously did not

10 There are two mentions of *consiglieri* in Nauplion in 162 years. Sathas, *Μνημεῖα* 4: 246, 254. Only twelve appear in the records of the Segretario Voci between 1442 and 1521, and none before or after. O’Connell, *Rulers of Venice*, passim. This is the only document that shows someone in Nauplion actually acting in that role and neither is on the SV list.

11 ASVe Commissioni Provveditori, b 3/53: Commissione a Francesco Bragadin, also Sathas, *Μνημεῖα* I, 290–1 describes the role of *consiglieri*.

12 The Catello family is involved with the Anonymous narrative in several ways. Giovanni Catello is cited in the Nauplion petition. Giovanni and Michele Catello took the petition to Venice in 1450, the year of this hearing. Marin Catello is part of the hearing, and a Nicolò Catello was imprisoned at Mouchli in a similar process of justice. ASVe Senato Mar r.4, f79v. For more information on the family, D. Jacoby, *La féodalité en Grèce médiévale: ‘Les Assises de Romanie,’ sources, application et diffusion* (Paris 1971) 217–18. Also, A. Tsavara, ‘Devozione, violenza e uva passa: Le famiglie di Mourmouris e Catello di Nauplion nel XV secolo’, in *I Greci durante la venetocrazia: Uomini, spazio, idee (XIII-XVIII sec)* (Venice 2009) 597–611. Choras, ‘Αυτοβιογραφικό’, 354, no. 10.

13 B. Ploumides, ‘Ειδήσεις για το Βενετοκρατούμενο Ναύπλιο’, *Πελοποννησιακά* 7 (1971) 266, no. 38 for 1491 and no. 39 for 1493: the Senate directs the use of the four Franciscans of *Santa Maria vallis viridis*, S. Maria de Valverde, a community from Venice, to save the expense of a chaplain. Thiriet, no. 2643 for 22 April 1444, advises the same for Modon, which also had a house of S. Maria de Valverde.

14 *Sindici*: patricians sent out in pairs biennially to the *città* of the *stato da mar* to investigate justice and finances, and to hear complaints from local residents.

realize how well Priam Contarini spoke Greek.¹⁵ We can be fairly sure that Catello also spoke Greek, as his family had been in Nauplion for at least five generations. Since Anonymous specified that there were four of them alone, there was therefore no interpreter who normally would have recorded the hearing. Given that there were *archons* as witnesses, the hearing must have been conducted both in Italian and Greek. So when Anonymous muttered his obscenity, it made any appeal to the *sindici* problematical because when the members of the hearing wrote up the charge,¹⁶ αὐτοὶ δὲ τὸ μετάρπεν (σε) [καὶ εἶπαν ὅτι] χέζω τοὺς συντίχους. ('They changed it <το> "I s**t on the syndics."')¹⁷ It is possible that Contarini misheard a muttered ἐκείνους as συντίχους. However, by this point in the narrative, Anonymous has established his own personality firmly enough so that Contarini appears the more reliable.

Anonymous was fined 500 ducats, banned from the territory, and imprisoned without being allowed to see his family. At the end of his complaint he is sitting in jail, locked up every evening by four guards.¹⁸ There need not be a conflict between banishment and continued imprisonment, if he were being held until he could be heard by the *sindici*. If so, he would have to wait, at a minimum, until the winter of the following year for his case to be heard. The next *sindici* for Greece were not appointed until eighteen months after this complaint, in late September of 1452.¹⁹

The week after the fair of Agios Demetrios of 26 October 1449, the Venetian *chomonanza* or *comunanza*²⁰ of Argos wrote a petition to the Signoria of Venice which included their own complaint against Asan and what had happened at the fair. In this context, a petition comes to us as the record of the Venetian senate's action on a particular matter and the document on which they voted. The Senato Mar register holds a copy of the petition under discussion and after each item of the petition, the senate's decision and the final vote: the petition has the date of the senate action, not of the original request. This petition and the one from Nauplion were answered by the senate on 26 July 1451, and together the two provide extensive information about the governance

15 Nauplion petition no. 4: 'miser Priamo Contarini per vostra comandamento romagna provededor et ambaxador, et ... andra al despoto ... per saper la lingua greca.'

16 The *Assizes of Romania* (see below) provided that: 'A party, if he so wishes, can request that a sentence of judgment be given in written form. And the court is bound to give it to him under the seals of those who make the judgment. And the lord is bound to have the judgment of his court placed in writing in his register.' P. Topping, *Feudal institutions as revealed in the Assizes of Romania* (Philadelphia 1949) no. 168.

17 This line – αὐτοὶ δὲ τὸ μετάρπεν καὶ εἶπαν ὅτι σε χέζω τοὺς συντίχους – has too many syllables for the meter. The substitution of σε for καὶ εἶπαν ὅτι would solve the problem.

18 This is surely poetic license. The administration at Coron had been instructed a few years earlier that the two veterans who held the keys to the prison as a sinecure were to be fired, and the aide to the castellan was to have the keys. ASVe Senato Mar r. 1, f. 227v. for 29 March 1444. Thiriet, *Régestes*, no. 2641.

19 ASVe Senato Mar r. 4, f. 153 for 28 September 1452. Thiriet, *Régestes*, no. 2900.

20 *Comunità*. The petition uses both spellings of the term.

of the two cities.²¹ What is important here is that there has been a great deal of rivalry, and even hostility, between Nauplion and Argos for residents and tax money, and by extension, between and within various cultural groupings, with residents of Nauplion holding lands in what had become Argos territory. The particular situation had begun nine years earlier, in 1442, when Argos acquired a separate administration, after having been administered by Nauplion since 1397.²²

Anonymous had described Argos as τὸ Ἄργος τὸ παμπόνηρον καὶ κατεξουρισμένον, which I have loosely translated as ‘piss-poor, thuggish Argos.’ Nauplion, wanting to return Argos to its former subordinate position, claimed that in comparison to Nauplion, Argos was a village with a warehouse, inhabited only by people who work the land – all of them foreigners, and given the number of families, probably not more than a total population of 400 – while Nauplion had solid citizens.²³ These foreigners were primarily Albanians whom the Venetian administration had encouraged, with various tax cuts and suspensions, to move into the empty houses left after the Ottoman invasion of 3 June 1397 that burned the city and took away some 14,000 people from the area.²⁴ The Argos petition states that Argos has 115 households – ‘not counting others who come from time to time’.²⁵

Strikingly, the two petitions themselves give linguistic support to the descriptions of Argos by Anonymous and the Nauplion petition. The secretary who recorded both of the petitions obviously copied from the original texts as he preserved the Venetian-Italian dialect of section six of the petition from Argos with its fragile sentences, arbitrary

21 Argos petition: ASVe Senato Mar r. 4 ff. 76v–77v. Nauplion petition: ASVe Senato Mar r. 4 ff. 77v–79v. Both petitions can be found at the website of the Archivio di Stato di Venezia at <http://www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/home.htm>

22 See also *Rulers of Venice*, Map 4: Argos, in which the records for Argos begin in 1442. Also Hopf, *Chroniques*, 383. Argos had its own administration very briefly, from 1394 to 1397, when it first came under Venetian control, but after the Ottoman raid of 1397 there was essentially no one left in the town.

23 Nauplion petition: no. 2: ‘Aricordando ala Vostra Eccellentia che Argos aparangon de Napoli e una villa, et una cesta, et non habita li altri che homeni che lavora la terra, equi tuti forestieri, ma Napoli ha de boni zitadini ...’

24 This number seems quite large. Whatever the correct number, many people had abandoned the area before the arrival of the Turks. Within a year after the raid, the *podestà* of Nauplion had already brought in the first Albanian settlers to replace the missing. Two years later it was announced that those who had abandoned the area and wanted to come back could do so and be exempt from all *angariae* for five years, as well as Albanians ‘and other good men’ with their horses who could serve under arms. ASVe Senato Misti r. 44 f. 62v. Thiriet, *Régestes*, no. 950 for 7 September 1398, no. 967 for 27 July 1399. Michaelis Mourmouris was finally able to return home after nine years as a captive, but as his property had been given to a new owner, the *podestà* gave him new lands. Tsavara, ‘Devozione’, 598. *Pseudo-Sphrantzes*, 225, claims that 30,000 had been taken into slavery; that number of inhabitants could not have been achieved until the later 20th century.

25 Argos petition: no.1. The petition shows the slow immigration of Albanians from the Morea who were willing to live in town and work the land, stating that first 18 families came, and then another 7. Immigrants got 40 *stremmata* of farm land, 5 *stremmata* of vineyards, and the shell of a burnt-out house. Allotments were made with a realistic appraisal of how much land was needed to support a family, and also to produce the wine which was the main Venetian interest in the area.

suffixes, and frightful spelling (Appendix 2). The rest of the Argos petition, and the one from Nauplion, have less dialect, and more conventional grammar and spelling. The senate's responses to the individual items in both petitions are in Latin.

Before the division of authority in 1442, individuals who were banned for murder were banned from the whole area. After 1442, it was common for individuals banned – banishment was generally reserved for violence or murder – from Argos simply to go over to Nauplion, or vice versa. The situation had become unmanageable for both cities and Nauplion petitioned Venice to decree that banishment from either city again meant banishment from both. This was granted in the Nauplion petition of July 1451, and it is possible that the case of Anonymous had been one of the incidents prompting that petition.²⁶ Nauplion also petitioned for a return to the earlier practice whereby the *rettor* of Argos could not proceed in a criminal matter without the direction of the *podestà* of Nauplion, but this was refused by the senate.²⁷ The significance of this will be seen shortly.

Due to the split in administration, the Argos authorities did not have the formal records of property sales, fiefs, and leases in their territory, and the Nauplion administration refused to allow copies to be made of these records in their files. The Argos chancellor, who did have the records, had been taken captive by the Turks, and when his things were sent back to his family in Venice, his land records also went to Venice. Elders who knew the property lines were dying out.²⁸ Without legal land records it was impossible for Argos to identify revenues accurately, or for Argos families to give lands to their daughters as dowries or to their sons as inheritances.²⁹

Earlier, in a letter of 27 October 1450,³⁰ the senate had acknowledged a letter from the *rettor* of Nauplion which had stated that many of the good lands and vineyards had been assigned to Albanians and other foreigners who had moved in because of the tax concessions – they were free of all payments and personal service except guard duty – and that these concessions were extremely detrimental to the tax base which was supposed to pay administrative salaries and rebuild ruined walls which ought to have been repaired years before. Argos insisted that holders of property in that territory had to live in Argos, while Nauplion insisted that Naupliotes holding property in Argos territory could live anywhere they chose.

What had happened was that the property assignments made by Nauplion, in the 40-plus years during which the cities were under joint authority, were producing revenues that went to the Nauplion treasury, whether they were in Argos territory or Nauplion

26 Nauplion petition: no. 6.

27 Nauplion petition: no. 2.

28 The relevance of elders to property lines can be seen in Wright and Melville Jones, *Bartolomeo Minio*, no. 22 where the oldest (and most respected) inhabitants are called on to testify to their memories of assumptions about boundaries when it was necessary to identify the boundary between Turkish Argos and Venetian Nauplion.

29 Argos petition: no. 2.

30 ASVe Stato Mar r. 4, f. 17v.

territory. The many fewer land assignments made by Argos, since it had acquired its own administration eight years earlier, produced much less revenue for Argos than would have been available had Argos been able to control all the landholdings within that territory. The tracts of land assigned to the immigrants were not in question. The lands at issue were the fiefs which were inheritable,³¹ and the large tracts of land rented out by the administration for some period of time – five to ten, possibly twenty-nine, years – to individuals who should return the land ‘either in the same condition as when it was received, or better, and not worse.’³²

In both petitions there are references to ‘custom’ – ‘segond usanza e consueto del paese’. The Latins held Argos and Nauplion in the years after 1204 from the Prince of Achaia, who paid homage to the Prince of the Morea. The system of feudal law and custom established, called the *Assizes of Romania*, came originally from Champagne with colonial situations informed by the *Assizes of Jerusalem* developed in the crusader East.³³ When Venice acquired Nauplion in 1388,³⁴ and Argos in 1394, from a young heiress – by request of local citizens (encouraged by strategic gifts)³⁵ – Venice agreed to govern ‘in accordance with custom,’ and in time put together collections of the *Assizes*

31 Venice continued to use the land terminology in use when it acquired the Argolid, but the meaning of ‘fief’ changed. It became an administrative term – a fief contained villages and the landholder was responsible for collecting the revenues – but Venice did not allow the privatization of the military or justice which is assumed in a feudal system. Jacoby, *Féodalité*, 221 misunderstands this.

32 ASV4 r. 4, f.17v. The Argos-Nauplion region had good soil, particularly that of Argos at the head of the bay with its many springs. Nauplion was a comparatively large local and export market, and it had a port. Many of the landholders were cash croppers and could be considered ‘middle class.’ The immigrants with 40 *stremmata* could more than support themselves and probably make a profit. (Personal communication from Guy Sanders, 25 March 2011.) Also see G. Sanders, ‘Landlords and tenants: sharecroppers and subsistence farming in Corinthian historical context’, pre-publication paper for ‘Corinth in Context’ conference, at http://ascsa.academia.edu/GuySanders/Papers/379298/Corinthian_Landlords_and_Tenants_Sharecroppers_and_Subistence_Farming_in_Greek_Historical_Context

33 For the contents of the *Assizes*, Topping, *Feudal institutions as revealed in the Assizes of Romania*.

34 *Diplomatarium Veneto-Levantinum: sive, Acta et diplomata res venetas, graecas atque levantis*, ed. G. Thomas (New York 1966) II, no. 126 and no. 127 give the two treaties of 12 December 1388 in which Venice acquired both territories from Maria d’Engino, widow of a wealthy Venetian, Pietro Corner. Both documents refer to her as ‘vendatrix’ and state that she is over the age of fourteen and under the age of twenty-five (‘minor viginti quinque annis, major tamen quatuordecim’). She was twenty-four, so she was old enough to be married, but not of an age to transfer property legally. Twenty-five was the legal age for a woman to transfer property. This seems not to have been noticed before by anyone writing on the subject. Maria remarried, her husband died in 1392, and then she died in 1393 without heirs.

35 The essential work on Latin rule and Venetian acquisition is still A. Luttrell, ‘The Latins of Argos and Nauplion: 1311-1394’, *Papers of the British School at Rome* 34 (1966) 34–55. The 1288 document specifies that Maria ‘uendit et tradidit et transtulit (Argos and Nauplion ... cum districtibus, pertinentiis, jurisdictionibus et *juribus* ipsorum locorum ...’ Argos was immediately occupied by Theodoros Palaiologos, Despot of Mistra, within four days of hearing of Pietro Corner’s death. He attempted a siege of Nauplion but because Venice could supply it by sea, he withdrew. The issue was finally settled in May 1396. F. Gregorovius, *Ιστορία της πόλεως Αθηνών κατά τους μέσους αιώνας* (Athens 1906) I, no. 10, gives the three-way treaty between Venice, Theodoros Palaiologos, and Nerio Acciaiuoli of Corinth.

to assist its administrators, an arrangement specific to Argos-Nauplion, Negroponte, and some islands, acquired from Latin owners. Over the years many differences had been identified between the Argos-Nauplion customs and those of Negroponte, and in 1451 – partly because the customs of Negroponte were inherited from Lombard custom, and those of Argos-Nauplion from the French, both with their own interpretations of Byzantine, and certainly the need had been highlighted by all these problems between Nauplion and Argos – Venice asked for a new collection and harmonization of customs to be made.³⁶

In its petition, Nauplion claimed it was *in la bocha di lovi*.³⁷ These *città* of the *stato mar* were administered on such small budgets and there were so many demands on territorial income that this was not an exaggeration. *Città* were expected to be self-supporting and to pay their own way. In the October letter, the senate directed that all concessions in Argos and Nauplion held for more than ten years were to be terminated and the lands put up for new leases of five to ten years, which would raise more funds. Nauplion was to keep a separate book of accounts in Greek for these lands. Furthermore, Nauplion wanted to make all land assignments for both territories, while Argos felt entitled to control its own, particularly as the administration could make a small profit from sales and rentals of land. The senate specified that Argos could indeed administer its own lands, but that all appeals on land issues were to be handled by the *rettor* of Nauplion.³⁸

The October document identified Michalis Kaligas and Andreas Fantalouris who had reported land frauds and were then rewarded with concessions of the same lands for five years.³⁹ This meant that there were, at a minimum, two more Greeks in addition to Anonymous towards whom other people harboured resentments over land.⁴⁰ The larger landholdings of 100 and 200 *stremmata*, the ones primarily at issue, could make a person quite wealthy, and were worth killing for.⁴¹ This document and the

36 ASVe Senato Mar r. 4, f. 42v for 27 March 1451. Thiriet #2851. Jacoby, *Féodalité*, part 2, ch. 3 ‘Nauplié et Argos’ discusses a number of issues that reflect details of the Assizes.

37 Nauplion petition: no.1. The first section of the petition is copied almost word for word, with variants in spelling – such as ‘bocca de lovi’ – from the Nauplion petition of 22 June 1445. ASVe Senato Mar r. 2 f. 88. Sathas, *Μνημεία* IV, 187.

38 Matters did not go well and in May 1452 the senate dealt with another petition from Nauplion about the Argos fiefs. Again, the *rettor* of Argos was to make the assignments in that territory, and appeals were to be heard in Nauplion. ASVe Senato Mar r. 4, f. 122r. Thiriet, *Régestes*, no. 2888.

39 ASVe Stato Mar r. 4, f. 17v for 27 October 1450. Unfortunately, the senate document gives no information other than the fact that Fantalouris had denounced someone. The name Fantalouris does not appear in the *PLP* although it is known in Nauplion for the 15-16th centuries. For more on the family, who were merchants with their own ship, K. Malevitis, ‘Η Μονή Μεταμορφώσεως Καραθόνας Ναυπλίου’, in *Ναυπλιακά Ανάλεκτα* IV (2000) 274 and n. 9. Kaligas appears in the *PLP* six times, no.10328–no. 10332, although not for the Morea.

40 An earlier land fraud is discussed in Jacoby, *Féodalité*, 219, in which Johannes and Helena Vlachos were stripped, in 1426, by the Minor Consiglio of land they had acquired from Niccolò of Athens.

41 ASVe Senato Mar r. 4 f. 17v for 27 October 1450. Wright and Melville-Jones, *Bartolomeo Minio*, xxx–xxxi, gives an account of the kind of violence the intense competition for land could engender.

Anonymous complaint, as well as the instructions to keep a copy of the records in Greek, together sketch out a Nauplion community of well-off Greeks in trade in mid-century. It is tempting to speculate whether Anonymous was the one whom Fantalouris and Kaligas had denounced for land fraud. If the hearing for Anonymous had been held in early or mid-summer of 1450, there was time for a decision to have been made on the matter in Venice by the end of October. Anonymous did say that *archons* testified against him.

It was this conflict of jurisdictions that entangled Anonymous. He was from Nauplion territory but had been banned from there. When he tried to go to Argos after his miserable months in Mouchli, people who were afraid he would take something of theirs – very probably their land, as Kaligas and Fantalouris had succeeded in doing – saw to it that he was imprisoned, and then ‘unjustly’ plotted to banish and imprison him and to destroy his children. The fact that at every point Anonymous made claims of plots against him did not mean he was wrong about every plot. It is within reason that he knew of others whose property leases had been discredited, and he would have known Kaligas and Fantalouris whether or not they were his accusers. Argos had imprisoned him, and then sent him over for Nauplion to settle an issue that could not be handled in Argos. If murder or some other criminal action had been at issue, he would have been kept in Argos. Anonymous seems to have been caught in an inter-jurisdictional issue in the previous year before the details of handling such issues had been worked out. His private narrative fits well within what the two petitions have to say about the conflicts between the two places over authority and the anxiety regarding land holdings, as well as what they say about problems with the Despotate.

Both cities complained about the problem of the *chiefali* or *zefali*⁴² of Mouchli and his Albanians who came into the territories, fed their flocks without paying the pasturage fee, raided farms and vineyards, caused trouble generally, and sometimes committed murder. The Nauplion petition is brief in this matter, stating that the *zefali*, Demetrios Lascaris Asan, would come into the territory, force Albanians into his service, and collect payments in cash from them. Of course, this impinged on the ability of the Albanians to pay Nauplion taxes. In contrast, section six of the Argos petition turns its information about Asan into a drama:⁴³

Also, about the Abanians who live in the territory of Your Excellent Signoria – He [Asan] orders them about and attacks and beats them, and takes them by force and imprisons them, and judges them in his way and says that they are his and not the Signoria’s. And he makes the chief of the *catuna*⁴⁴ pay 1 gold ducat for each hearth, for some two ducats, and for some three, according to the families that he has. The said chief is called the *primicerio*, and if he doesn’t pay immediately, his cow or horse or sheep is taken, and he is put in prison. Because of this they ask the favour that they be protected so that they want to be under Your Signoria rather

42 The title for ‘governor’ was κεφαλῆ. Sphrantzes § XIX, 11.

43 Argos petition: no. 6. The original text is in Appendix 2.

44 *Catuna*, *catund*: the impermanent encampment of an Albanian clan.

than under Greeks. *La chiefali* of Mouchli is named Dimitri Laskaris. He came to trade at the Fair of S. Francesco at Kiveri,⁴⁵ that was last Saturday and that he should favour our journey, for we wanted to go to Venetian territory for the one at Nauplion since I trade with him [?] And the Sunday which was the fair of Dimitri we were making our way between Argos and Kiveri. He dashed past the toll post, and we were surrounded, and we were seized and we were unhorsed and were taken with an Albanian from Argos who came with us to bring the horses back.

[Our] hands were tied behind the back and we were sent to Mouchli, and put in the bottom of the tower, and he took from them their horses and two other people were beaten, and he ordered his *stratioti* to go execute justice that is, to the forks.⁴⁶ And he struck to the ground and inflicted much dishonour on Messer the Rettor,⁴⁷ and had horses given to us, pretended to let us go on our way, and he sent a man to say that we would be held in Mouchli. And because of that Messer the Rettor sent the horseman to see what was going to happen to us, and thus he was held as well. And he had the horse of Messer the Rettor taken – the poor young man went on foot – as far as Argos, where he was dismissed, and he ordered the pigs of the brother of the Albanian whom he had in prison taken. And he sent the Albanian to take the horse of the priest-teacher and [he said] ‘Give it to me and then I will give you your pigs!’

Answer. We are writing the Lord Despot Demetrios in the usual form to satisfy custom that he should see that similar incidents do not occur.

It is a fine and pathetic narrative, jumbled in sequence, not all of it adequately explained, and contains a remarkable amount of information about Demetrios Laskaris Asan who was apparently inclined to arbitrary violence, extortion, raiding, kidnapping, murder, horse-theft, violation of the inviolable status of messengers, and pig-stealing. The grievances provide the only indication we have that horses and pigs were raised in Venetian Argos-Nauplion territory.⁴⁸ It is also the only reference to a fair of S. Francesco and to a

45 The fifteenth-century Kiveri is now known as Myloi. (The present Kiveri is two miles further down the coast.) It was a major Venetian fief, and there are remains of a hill fortification overlooking the marshes and the coast road. The main routes from Argos-Nauplion into the Morea, and down the coast to Astros, passed through here. The wall that marked the Despotate-Venetian boundary ran from the hill to the sea: parts of this wall and two towers can still be seen. Photographs and more information at <http://surprisedbytime.blogspot.com/2009/09/frogs.html>

46 The *stratioti* were ordered to hang some of the unfortunates. The site of Mouchli’s ‘forks’ – or anything else, for that matter – is unknowable. Nauplion’s ‘forks’ are identified outside the wall of Nauplion in a map of 1571 taken from a Venetian map of at least two generations earlier where the forks consist of two forked poles supporting a beam. The map is available at <http://nauplion.net/Camoccio%20map.htm>. Such gallows can be seen in Pisanello’s ‘St. George and the Princess of Trebizond.’

47 Perigrino Venerio di Bernardo. He died the next year and was replaced by Nicolò Valier q. Paolo. *Rulers of Venice*, Records, no. 20, no. 22. Hopf, *Chroniques* 382–3.

48 *Stratioti* were supposed to supply their own horses, and the Argos petition refers to hiring *stratioti* by providing the customary land and two ducats as a hiring bonus. Argos petition: no. 4.

Franciscan establishment at Kiveri. A separate entry in the petition says that the fifteen Greek *stratioti* stationed at Argos for defense could not, in fact, defend against these attacks because they had to be out working on their farms.⁴⁹

The information we have about raiding is from Venetian sources which primarily record raids on Venetian areas. Sometimes the raiders are called ‘Greeks’, or ‘soldiers of the despot’, or at other times ‘Greeks and Albanians.’ At the time of these documents, Nauplion was trying to get back Didymo and the fortress of Kastri seized by Demetrios Palaiologos immediately after arriving in the Morea, as well as Thermissi taken by Theodoros Palaiologos a few years earlier. Venice occasionally made retaliation for major raids, such as hanging four Albanians for looting near Koron⁵⁰ or impounding the trade goods of some *archon*, as it did in 1452,⁵¹ but for the most part Venice made *demarches*.⁵² Ambassadors were sent to Mouchli, and in parallel with these documents, two different ambassadors were sent to Constantinople to protest the Moreote raids, as well as other matters.

The person Anonymous calls Asan is called Demetrios Laskaris in the Argos and Nauplion documents because Venetians used only two names and disregarded the sometimes multiple Greek names. It is quite probable that his name was Demetrios Laskaris Asan. There are threads of information for a Demetrios Asan, and threads for a Demetrios Laskaris, and it is difficult to be sure where these threads tie together and where they should be allowed to dangle. One branch of the Asan family in the Morea had come to the Morea with Demetrios Palaiologos when he became Despot in 1449, the year of this fair, because of his marriage to Theodora Asanina, daughter of Paul Asan.⁵³ Demetrios as despot appointed Paul’s son Matthaïos as governor of Corinth, and it was Matthaïos who eventually surrendered Corinth to Mehmed II and who arranged the formalities for the surrender of Demetrios Palaiologos and Mistra.⁵⁴

49 Argos petition: no. 4. The emphasis here on Greek *stratioti* is important, as *stratioti* were more often Albanian.

50 ASVe Senato Misti r. 52, f. 95v. Sathas, *Μνῆμειν* III, 175, 11 June 1418.

51 Thiriet, *Régestes*, no. 2835.

52 Simultaneously, Athanasios Laskaris was in Venice as ambassador from Mistra to protest raids from Methoni-Koroni on the Despotate. ASVe Stato Mar r. 4, f. 2. Thiriet, *Régestes*, no. 2835.

53 Sphrantzes, § XXIV, 9. Paul Asan was formerly governor of the city of Constantinople. Demetrios and Theodora were married in 1441.

54 N. Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins* (Cambridge 2009) 279–81, gives extensive information on Paul and Matthaïos Asan, but draws too hard a line between the loyalties of the Asanes to Demetrios Palaiologos and the Ralles to Thomas Palaiologos. There are a number of possible indications that the sympathies of this Asan, regardless of his personal fate, inclined to the West. For example, Georgios Amiroutzes, a supporter of Union, wrote for Asan a ‘short’ description – 12 printed pages – of what happened at the Council of Florence. L. Mohler, ‘Eine bisher verlorene Schrift von Georgios Amirutzes über das Konzil von Florenz’, *Oriens Christianus* n.s. 9 (1920) 20–35. An undated letter of consolation to Asan on the deaths of three adult sons indicates that they were all killed fighting against the Turks. S. Lampros, *Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά* (Athens 1921) 1. 249. With one exception, the Asan name is absent in accounts of Greeks who went to the West, and in lists of Venetian *stratioti*.

Despite efforts to connect Demetrios Asan with Matthaïos,⁵⁵ he appears to come from the older Asan branch which arrived in the Morea when Andronikos Asan was governor of the Morea between 1316–22. Andronikos had rebuilt the fortress of Mouchli to guard the eastern route into the Morea from the Argolid.⁵⁶ Asans became prominent in affairs in Constantinople and the Morea, and there were a number of Palaiologos-Asan marriages over several generations. Cyriaco of Ancona met the Demetrios Asan of the raids when he was governor of Corinth at the end of 1443,⁵⁷ just after Constantine arrived to take over the Despotate of Mistra from his brother Theodoros II. As Constantine did not make formal appointments of governors until 1445,⁵⁸ it appears that Demetrios Laskaris Asan had been appointed to Corinth by Theodoros, and that Constantine made his appointments and transfers only after he learned the personalities and situations in the Morea. This Demetrios Laskaris Asan can be identified with the Demetrios Laskaris of the Moreote *archons* whose pragmatic loyalty Mehmed II accepted in December 1454 after the uprisings of 1453–54.⁵⁹

Asan offered Mouchli to Venice in the fall of 1456, which Venice did not accept, although she did accept three other castles from other individuals offered at the same time.⁶⁰ It would seem risky for someone who had pledged loyalty to Mehmed to then offer his city to Venice, but perhaps Mehmed's delay in coming to the Morea offered an opportunity for second thoughts. When Mehmed did come into the Morea in 1458, Demetrios Asan – whom Sphrantzes bitterly calls ὁ κάλος κάγαθὸς Ἀσάνης

55 D. Zakythinos, *Le despotat grec de Morée* (Paris 1975) II, 114, relates that in March 1453, Venice sent Paul Morosini to the despot Demetrios to claim damages for his molestations of Nauplion and Argos with Demetrios Asan. There seems to have been no resolution of the matter. Zakythinos says that Demetrios Asan was the brother-in-law of Demetrios Palaiologos but no contemporary document links the two, nor does any link Demetrios Asan with Paul or Matthaïos Asan. The *PLP* gives no family information for Demetrios Asan (no. 1492, no. 91370) beyond mention of children, and does not know of the three documents discussed in this paper. W. Isenberg, *Europäische Stammtafeln* (Marburg 1975–78) no. 171 puts Demetrios tentatively in the family of Konstantinos Palaiologos Asanes and his son Michael Komnenos Tornikes Palaiologos Asanes: there is no documentary evidence for or against this.

56 Mouchli was a new city, founded in the 1270s for its defensive site at the end of a major mountain pass. An aerial photograph makes clear its position and why the site was selected: see <http://surprisedbytime.blogspot.com/2010/05/archons-demetrios-laskaris-asan-of.html>. Andronikos Asan, Byzantine governor of the Morea between 1316 and 1322, was the son of Ivan III of Bulgaria and Eirene Palaiologos, sister of Andronikos II who appointed him to the position.

57 E. Bodnar, *Cyriac of Ancona: later travels* (Cambridge, MA 2003) letter I, 9.

58 Sphrantzes, § XXVII, 4.

59 Several other governors are included in this list of names. ASVe Documenti Turchi b.1/11, Also, F. Miklosich and I. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana* (1865) III, 290. The text and translation can be found at <http://angiolello.net/ARCHONS.pdf>. I have an analysis of this document with identifications in my forthcoming book, *The knight and death: the Kladas affair and the 15th-century Morea*.

60 ASVe Senato Secreti r. 20 f. 105 for 12 Nov 1456. Also Sathas, *Μνημεῖα* 1:#153.

Δημέτριος – reasonably surrendered Mouchli to him that June.⁶¹ There is no word on Asan after 1458, although it was Mehmed's practice to keep high-ranking individuals close to him and possibly, later, to appoint them as governors in other areas.⁶²

Like the information for Asan, the account by Anonymous ends unsatisfactorily. However, as the sole vernacular narrative by a Greek in the fifteenth century Morea, it carries a disproportionate weight of information, and there is no reason not to consider that it reflects a real situation. Given the sparse survivals for Argos, and the erratic nature of those for Nauplion, the conjunction of these three documents is remarkable. They offer unique material for further study both of the Despotate and of the Venetian Morea.

APPENDIX 1

+ ,αυνα' Μαρτιοῦ 22

Ἄρχοντες καὶ ἀδελφοί, μικροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι
 τοιοῦτον γράμμα οἱ μέλλοντες θεωρεῖν καὶ ἀναγιγνόςκειν
 τὸ τί πρᾶγμα καὶ συμφορὰ ἐσυνέβην εἰς ἐμένα
 ὅπου εἰς ἄλλον [[τινὰν]] χριστιανὸν τοιοῦτον μὴ συνέβη.
 Ἐγὼ ἀπ' τ' Ἀνάπλιν ἤμουν, ἤμουν ἀναπαημένος.
 Καὶ ἀπὸ ὅχλησιν, ἡ ὁποία ἐσυνέβη
 εἰς τὸ πανεγύριν τοῦ Ναυπλιοῦ τοῦ μέγα Δημετρίου
 ἐλαβόθηκεν ἄνθρωπος ὀνόματι Σπαθάρος
 καὶ ἀπὸ 'κεῖνο ἀπόθανεν ἐκεῖνος ὁ Σπαθάρος.
 Καὶ τινὲς ὅπου μοῦ κακοθέλασιν καὶ εἶχαν σ' ἐμὲν τὸν φθόνον,
 ὅπως νὰ μὲ ἐξορίσωσιν ἀπ' τὸ ἐδικὸν μου σπίτι,
 ἀνάγκασαν τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἐκείνου τοῦ Σπαθάρη
 νὰ εἰποῦν ὅτι ἐγὼ τὸν λάβωσα, ἔδε ἁμαρτία μεγάλη!
 Τὸ ὁποῖον, διὰ τὸ εἰπεῖν ἐκείνου τοῦ Ἀλβανίτη,
 μὲ ἔκαμεν ὁ ποδεστάς νὰ λείπω ἀπὸ τὴν χώρα.
 Ἐκούρσευσαν τὰ ζῶα μου ἐκεῖνοι οἱ Ἀλβανίτες
 καὶ ἐγὼ διὰ τὰ ζῶα μου ὑπήγα εἰς τὸν Ἀσάνην.
 Ἀσάνης μὲ περίωρισε, εἰς τὴν φυλακὴν μὲ βάνει,
 εἰς τὴ φυλακὴν, στὰ σίδερα κακὰ περιορισμένον.
 Τέσσαρας μῆνας ἔποικα ἐκεῖ περιορισμος.
 Εἰς τὸ σκοινὶ μὲ βάνασιν, διὰ νὰ μὲ ἐξετάζουν.
 Ἀφότης εἶδαν καθαρὰ ἐγὼ πταισθῆς δὲν εἶμαι,
 ὄρισαν καὶ ἀφήκαν με, ἐλευθερίαν μοῦ δίδουν,
 κρισιμόγραφον μοῦ ἔκαμεν ἁθωωτικὸν τὸ γράμμα
 καὶ τρεῖς στρατιῶτες μοῦ ἔδωσαν, διὰ νὰ μὲ συντροφεύσουν.

61 *Laionici Chalcocandylae Historiarum Demonstrationes*, ed. E. Darkó (Budapest 1922) II, 206. Sphrantzes, § XXXVIII, 1. Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans., C. Riggs (Princeton 1954) III, 22.

62 Doukas XLV. 12: Παραλαβὼν οὖν πᾶσαν τὴν Πελοπόννησον καὶ ἐγκαταστήσας ἀρχηγούς καὶ ἡγεμόνας, αὐτὸς εἰς τὴν Ἀδριανουῦ ὤμισε, φέρον μετ' αὐτοῦ πανοικὶ τὸν Δημέτριον, ἄγων σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ τοὺς παλατίου καὶ τοὺς λογάδας καὶ εὐτυχεῖς πάσης Ἀχαιᾶς, Λακεδαιμονίας καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἐπαρχιῶν. The consideration shown to Asan's daughter, wife of the ruler of Athens, suggests some favour from Mehmed. A. Bryer, 'The Roman Orthodox world', in J. Shepard (ed.), *The Cambridge history of the Byzantine empire, c. 500-1492* (Cambridge 2008) 875. M. Philippides, *An anonymous Greek chronicle: Ἐκθεσις Χρόνικη* (Brookline, MA 1990) § 53. Asans have not shown up so far in subsequent lists of *stratioti*.

Ἐγὼ δέ, διὰ τὸν τόπον μου καὶ διὰ τὴν Αὐθεντιάν μου,
 ἠθέλησα πάλε νὰ ἐλθῶ εἰς τόπον τοῦ Ἀγίου Μάρκου,
 εἰς τὸ Ἄργος τὸ παμπόνηρον καὶ κατεξουρισμένον,
 ὁποῦ, ὅταν τὸ ἐθυμήθηκα εἰς τὸ Ἄργος διὰ νὰ ἔλθω,
 νὰ εἶχεν ἀστράψει ἡ Ἀνατολή, νὰ εἶχε βροντήσει <ή> Δύση
 καὶ νὰ ἤθελε γένει καὶ χειμῶν ἀμέτρητος καὶ μέγας,
 ὁποῦ νὰ ἴθελαι ἐμποδισθῇ, εἰς τὸ Ἄργος νὰ μὴν ἔλθω.
 Ἀπότες ἦλθα καὶ ἔμπηκα ἐδῶ εἰς τὸ Ἄργος ἐτουτί,⁶³
 (εἶδαν κακὸν)⁶⁴ ἀπὸ ἐκείνους, καλὸν δὲν τοὺς ἐφάνη,
 ἐσκόπησαν οἱ Χριστιανοὶ νὰ πάρω τὴν τιμὴν των.
 Τῆς ὥρας ὀρδινιάσασιν, στὴν φυλακὴν μὲ βάνουν
 ἃ μὴδ' οὐ εὐρέθηκεν τινὰς ἄρχοντας Βενετσιάνος
 καὶ ἐγγυητὴς ἐστάθηκεν, στὸ σπίτι του μὲ δέχθη
 <καὶ> μὴνας δυόμιση ἤμουν μετ' αὐτὸν περιορισμός.
 Τῆς ὥρας δὲ ὁ ποδεστὰς ἐγράψε νὰ μ' ἀφήσουν
 ... ἦταν ὀρδινιά ὅπως νὰ μ' ἀδικήσουν
 οὐδόλας δὲν μ' ἄφηναν ἐκ τὴν φυλακὴν νὰ ἔβγω,
 εἴχασιν δὲ τὴν ὀρδινιάν διὰ λόγον νὰ μὲ πιάσουν
 καὶ ἐγὼ ὁ ἄθλιος δὲν ἤξευρα τὸ ἐπιβούλευμά των,
 ὁποῦ μοῦ ἐπιβουλεύονταν ἀδίκως νὰ μὲ χάσουν
 ... νὰ μὲ ἐξορίσωσιν καὶ νὰ μὲ φυλακώσουν,
 νὰ χάσουν τὰ παιδάκια μου, ἔδε ἁμαρτία μεγάλη!
 Τὸ ὅποιον πρᾶγμα, ἄρχοντες, μικροὶ τε καὶ μεγάλοι,
 ἀπότες ἀναθράφημεν καὶ εἶδαμεν τὸν κόσμον,
 τέτιον πρᾶγμα, πούποτε κανεῖς οὐδὲν τὸ εἶδε
 οὐδὲ εἶδεν το οὐδὲ ἤκουσεν τέτιον πρᾶγμα νὰ γένει.
 Θέλω ἐδῶ νὰ σᾶς εἰπῶ τι ἔναι ὁποῦ μοῦ συνέβε,
 Μίαν ἡμέραν εἴμεσθην μέσα εἰς τὸ παλάτιν,
 οἱ τέσσαροί μας εἴμεσθην, ἄλλος κανεῖς δὲν ἦτον,
 Ρετούρης ἦτονε ὁ εἰς, φρά Νιλοκὸς ὁ ἄλλος,
 ἦταν δὲ καὶ ὁ κύρ Μαρὶν, λεγόμενος Κατέλος,
 ἤμουν καὶ ἐγὼ ὁ ἄθλιος, ὁ βαριομοιρασμένος.
 Ἐκεῖ ἐκαταναφέρναμε τινὰ ἐκ τὰ διαβασμένα.
 Καὶ μέσα εἰς τοῦτο ἄρχοντες εἶπαν διὰ τ' Ἀνάπλιν
 καὶ ἐγὼ ἐπαρεπονόμουνα τὸ πῶς μὲ ἀδικήσαν.
 Καὶ εἰς ἀπὸ τοὺς ἐκείνους τοῦτον τὸν λόγον λέγει,
 ' Ἀκόμη ἐκεῖνοι τοῦ Ναυπλίου σὲ θέλουν συντιχάρη.'
 Καὶ ἐγὼ μετεωρίστηκα, χωρὶς κακίας μάχος,
 <καὶ> εἶπα ὅτι χέζω τοὺς ἐκείνους τοὺς Ναυπιώτες,
 αὐτοὶ δὲ τὸ μετᾴτρεψεν καὶ εἶπαν ὅτι χέζω τοὺς συντίχους
 καὶ ὁ Ρετούρης τὸ ἐκατάδωσε καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸ μαρτυροῦσιν
 καὶ μέναν ἐζημιώσασιν δουκάτα πεντακόσια
 Στὴν φυλακὴν μὲ βάνασιν, στὸν πύργον ἀποκάτω
 ἐκ τὸν τόπον μὲ ἐξώρισαν χρόνους δεκατεσσάρους
 καὶ δὲν ἀφήνουν νὰ μὲ ἰδοῦν ἀπὸ τοὺς ἐδικούς μου.
 Κάθε βράδῳ μὲ φυλάγουσιν τέσσερις μπαργιζένοι⁶⁵
 ὅλην τὴν μέραν εἶμαι μοναχὸς καὶ ὁ Θεὸς νὰ μὲ βοηθήσῃ

63 Choras: ἐτοῦτο.

64 Choras: εἶδαν ...

65 Petros Haritatos suggested to me that μπαργιζένοι for prison guards derives ultimately from *bargello*, 'fortified tower.'

καὶ εἴ τις μοῦ παταίει, ἄρχοντες, ὁ Θεὸς νῦν τότε σώσει.

+ 1451 March 22⁶⁶

Archons and brothers, small and great,
 you are going to contemplate and understand these lines,
 this affair, this disaster that happened to me
 may it not happen to any other Christian.
 I was from Nauplion, I was comfortably fixed.
 What happened is, because of an event
 at the Nauplion fair of great Demetrios,
 a man by name of Spatharos was wounded
 and that Spatharos died of it.
 Certain men who wished me ill and were jealous of me,
 in order to drive me from my home
 forced the brothers of that Spatharos
 to say that I wounded him: see what an outrage!
 Because of what the Albanian said,
 the *podestà* ordered me to leave the territory.
 Those Albanians rustled my animals
 and I went to Asan to reclaim those animals.
 Asan bound me, he put me in his prison,
 in his prison, I was bound with heavy irons.
 Four months I lived there bound.
 They tortured me with the rope, to examine me.
 When they saw clearly I was not at fault,
 they decided and released me, they gave me freedom,
 they gave a written judgment, a writ of acquittal,
 and gave me three *stratioti* to see me safely on.
 I, for the sake of my land and my lord,
 wanted to return to the territory of S. Marco,
 to piss-poor thuggish Argos,
 where, when I remembered Argos, I wanted to go.
 Would that there had been lightning in the east, thunder in the west,
 would that there had been an endless and great storm,
 to prevent me from going to Argos.
 When I went and came here to Argos,
 I saw [evil] among them, good did not appear.
 The Christians expected I would take some valuable of theirs.
 Right off they ordered for me to be put in prison.
 Unless some Venetian archon was found,
 and he stood security; he received me in his house,
 two and a half months I was confined in his house.
 At that time, the *podestà* wrote an order to release me,
 ... it was an order for them to treat me unjustly,
 they certainly did not let me go from prison,
 they had the order in writing to take me
 and I the wretched did not know their contrivance
 how they plotted unjustly to destroy me
 to banish and imprison me,
 to destroy my children: see what a terrible crime!
 This thing, archons, small and great,

since I was weaned and saw the world,
 such a thing, no one has ever seen,
 no one ever saw it, no one heard of such a thing happening.
 I want you to know, I will say what happened to me.
 We were there one day, in the *palati*,⁶⁷
 we were four, there was no one else,
 the *rettor* was one, *Fra Nicolò* another,
 there was *kyr Marin*, known as Catello,
 and I the unfortunate, the heavy-fated one.
 There we argued back and forth some matter from the papers,
 and during that, some archons spoke for Nauplion
 and I complained about their injustice to me.
 One of them said these very words:
 'The people of Nauplion still want you judged by the syndics.'
 I blew up, without using violence,
 and said that I shit on the people of Nauplion,
 but they changed it and said that I shit on the syndics,
 The *rettor* handed down a decision and they witnessed it.
 They fined me 500 ducats.⁶⁸
 They marched me into prison, into the tower dungeon,
 they exiled me for 14 years,
 and didn't let my family see me.
 Every evening four turnkeys lock me up
 every day I am alone, may God help me,
 and if anyone wrongs me, archons, God help him.

APPENDIX 2

ASV Senato Mar r. 4, f. 77r

Ad sextum. Ancora per i albanexi che habita in lo luogo de la Exe. Vra. Signoria i quexi fi li comanda e sforza e batesi e tuo esso per forza, e fi li prexona e condanali a so muodo e dixè che i xe soi e non de la Signoria e fi li fa pagar duc. 1 d'oro per cadauna casa el cavo de la chatuna a chi do duc. e a chi tre secondo le fameie che l'a, el dicto cavo vien chiama primichiri, e se non paga si tosto fi vien tolto i suo boy o cavalo o mandra, e fi vien mesi in prexon e de questo domanda de gratia che i sia defenda perche i vol esser ananzi soto la Vostra Signoria cha soto griexi la chiefali de Mochli sia nome Dimitri Laschari vene achazar ali fie di de Francesco soto Zuner⁶⁹ che fo sabbado di era e chel favesse de la nostra andar che nui volevemo venir in veniexia per quei de Napoli de Romania che fo acazar con lui e la domenega di che fo ali fete Di[mi]tri andavemo per lo nostro camin infra Argo e Zuner lanca messo le poste, e fossemo messi in mezo e fossemo pya e fossemo descavalcha e fo prexo in albanese d'Argo che veniva con nui per condur i cavali in driedo, e fo liga le man de dreido e si fo manda al Moche [e] fo messo in lo fondo de la tore e toseli el so cavalo, e fo batudo altre 2 persone et comanda li pedoni soi che vada a taiar la zustisia, soe la forcha e chaze per terra e inzuriana molto desonesto misser lo rector, e a nui de fe dar i chavali mostra de lasarne andar per la nostra via, e lui

67 *Palati*: administrative building and residence of the *podestà* or *provveditore* or *rettor*: there is no implication of luxury.

68 Five hundred ducats is an extraordinarily large fine in the context of Venetian jurisprudence, let alone if one considers the steady reports of the shortages of coin in the *stato da mar*. This figure should probably be regarded as poetic license, although if Anonymous was being held on issues of land fraud, the fine might be a reflection of the value of the land or of his profits over several years.

69 Kiveri. See n. 45.

manda omo a dir che fossemo retunudi al Mochi e cossi de fo fato misser lo rector manda el cavalier per veder che fin sera de nui, e cosi fo retenudo anche lui e fi li fe tuor el cavalo che i era de misser lo rector el povero zovene ande ape infina Argo, quando ne fo da combia e manda a tuor li porchi del fradelo de l'albanexe che l'avea in prexon e inseniava l'albanexe va a tuor el cavalo de preio gramatico e dumelo e po te daro li to porzi.

Respondeatur. Scribemus domino despoto Demetrio in forma convenienti pro satisfacione moro et ut provibat quod similia de cetero non comittantur.



Contemporary perception of Byzantium in Turkish cinema: the cross-examination of Battal Gazi films with the *Battalname*

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During the 1960s and 1970s many Turkish films dealing with Byzantium were produced. The protagonists of these films were usually semi-historical/semi-legendary characters such as Battal Gazi, an eighth/ninth-century Arab frontier warrior. This paper proposes a cross-examination of the Battal Gazi films with the Battalname, a medieval prose work on the deeds of the same frontier warrior, in order to find out what Byzantium represented for the audience of these films in Turkey. This representation is important because the films played a crucial role in shaping the contemporary perception of Byzantium in Turkey.

Intellectuals of the Enlightenment such as Voltaire, Montesquieu and Gibbon, who considered Byzantium as oriental, obscure and schismatic, heavily influenced the image of Byzantium in Europe. Yet Byzantium served as a ‘toile de fond’ for numerous political choices in Europe from the time of its fall until the twenty-first century.¹ During the reign of Louis XIV of France (1638–1715), for example, the interest in Byzantium was closely associated with the universalistic claims and the absolutist ideology of the king, who found in Byzantium a perfect example of his dream. He prepared for the conquest of Istanbul and legitimized his aim by representing himself as the heir to Byzantium.² In the nineteenth century, the universal Christian rule concept attracted Ludwig II of Bavaria (1845–86), who financed architectural projects in the ‘Byzantine’ style.³ The aggressive and expansionist policies of Tsarist Russia were legitimized by the claims of Tsars over the Byzantine heritage but in the Bolshevik Russia of the 1920s, Byzantium

1 M. F. Auzepy, ‘La fascination de l’Empire’, in M. F. Auzepy (ed.), *Byzance en Europe* (Paris 2003) 7–16, hereafter *Byzance en Europe*.

2 J. P. Grégoire, ‘Louis XIV et l’Orient: la mission du capitaine Gravier d’Ortières (1685–1687)’, in *Byzance en Europe*, 31–41.

3 A. Berger, ‘Les projets byzantins de Louis II de Bavière’, in *Byzance en Europe*, 75–85.

was seen as decadent and oppressive.⁴ In modern Poland, the term ‘Byzantine’ has long lost its connection with the Eastern Roman Empire and it is utilized with a pejorative connotation designating the Russians, who are Orthodox Christians and who in the eighteenth century occupied an important part of the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth which adhered mainly to Roman Catholicism. In Greece, since the middle of the nineteenth century, Byzantium nourished the Great Idea and played an important role in the formation of Greek national identity.⁵

What about the contemporary perceptions of Byzantium in Turkey? To answer this question I chose the medium of cinema because although the academic circles in Republican Turkey had ignored Byzantium until the 1990s,⁶ after the 1960s Byzantium served as the main theme in popular Turkish ‘historical’ novels, in Turkish super-hero comic strips and films. Turkish cinema became the biggest producer of films on Byzantium. This trend, which began in the 1950s and accelerated in the 1960s and 1970s, was in parallel with the increase in the production of ‘historical’ novels. These were years of economic crisis for the Turkish film industry and among the low budget superhero films that were characteristic of this period fifteen films set against a Byzantine background were produced.⁷ The protagonists of these films, which may be considered as the Turkish equivalent of the American Super Hero films, were either characters drawn from popular Turkish comic strips or legendary figures such as Seyyid Battal Gazi, an eighth/ninth-century Muslim holy warrior of the Arab-Byzantine frontier, whose religious-heroic prose narrative, the *Battalname*, has been circulating orally and in written form in Anatolia since the twelfth/thirteenth century.

Within the limits of this paper, I will concentrate only on three of the Battal Gazi films; ‘The Legend of Battal Gazi,’ ‘The Revenge of Battal Gazi,’ and ‘The Son of Battal Gazi’.⁸ In the films devoted to a Byzantine subject, this is the only hero for whom we have a written epic, the *Battalname*, whose earliest manuscript dates to the fifteenth century.⁹ My intention here is to provide a small exercise. By comparing certain themes and *topoi* in the *Battalname* and in the films of Battal Gazi, and by pointing out the conscious or unconscious choices or omissions of some of these themes and *topoi*, I will inquire about the contemporary perception of Byzantium in Turkey. This

4 S. A. Ivanov, ‘Byzance rouge: la byzantinologie et les communistes (1928–1948)’, in *Byzance en Europe* 55–60.

5 M. Herzfeld, *Ours once more: folklore, ideology and the making of Modern Greece* (New York 1986).

6 N. Necipoğlu, ‘Türkiye’ de Bizans tarihçiliğinin dünü, bugünü ve sorunları’, *Toplumsal Tarih* 112 (April 2003) 72–7.

7 For the list of Turkish films on Byzantium, see G. Scognamillo, ‘Türk Sinemasında Bizans Oyunları’, *Sanat Dünyamız. Özel Bizans Sayısı* (1998) 155–63.

8 *Battal Gazi Destanı* (The Legend of Battal Gazi) (1971) (director, Atıf Yılmaz, scriptwriter, Ayşe Şasa); *Battal Gazi’nin İntikamı* (The Revenge of Battal Gazi) (1972) (director and scriptwriter, Natuk Baytan); *Battal Gazi’nin Oğlu* (The Son of Battal Gazi) (1974) (director, Natuk Baytan, scriptwriter, Duygu Sağıroğlu).

9 Y. Dedes, *Battalname*, 2 vols. (Cambridge 1996); For the German translation, based on post sixteenth-century manuscripts, see H. Ethe, *Die Fahrten des Sijjid Batthal: Ein Alt türkischer Volks- und Sittenroman*, 2 vols. (Leipzig 1871).

exercise is revealing in the sense that it shows how historical facts, oral tradition and works of literature are consciously or unconsciously manipulated and distorted in different historical periods in order to serve contemporary political aims.

The *Battalname* is perhaps one of the earliest prose works of Islamic Turkish literature in Anatolia. Although there is a general consensus among scholars that the initial composition of the Turkish *Battalname* should be dated to the Seljuk period, and that the composition could be associated with the Danişmendid Turcomans ruling Malatya and its surroundings after 1124, the exact date of an initial earlier copy cannot be stated with certainty.¹⁰ The actions of Battal Gazi in the *Battalname* are set within the historical context of Arab confrontation with Byzantium in Anatolia during the early Abbasid period.¹¹

The *Battalname* is considered to have inaugurated a famous cycle of Turco-Muslim religious-heroic prose narratives such as *Danişmendname* and *Saltukname*.¹² These three works of Anatolian Turkish literature can be considered, according to Yorgos Dedes, as the main examples of the heroic cycle of legends that deal with different aspects and periods of the Muslim efforts to conquer Byzantium.¹³ In terms of reflecting Muslim-Christian confrontation and of the frontier milieu in which the actions of their heroes take place, the *Battalname* shows similarities to the Byzantine *Digenis Akrites*,¹⁴ to the French epic poem *Chanson de Roland*,¹⁵ to crusader epic poems such as *Chanson d'Antioche*,¹⁶ *Chanson de Jerusalem*¹⁷ and *Les Chétifs*¹⁸ and to *El Poema del Cid*, the

10 P. N. Boratav, *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 'Battal'; F. Köprülü, *Türk Edebiyatında İlk Mutasavvıflar* (Ankara 1993) 232–3; Dedes, *Battalname* 13.

11 For the study of Byzantine warfare between the Byzantines and the Arabs, see J. Haldon, H. Kennedy, 'The Arab-Byzantine frontier in the eighth and ninth centuries: military organisation and society in the borderlands', *ZRVI* 19 (1980) 79–116.

12 I. Melikoff-Sayar, *La Geste de Melik Danişmend. Étude critique du Danişmendname*, 2 vols. (Paris 1960); F. İz and G.A. Tekin, *Saltukname. Ebu'l Hayr Rumi'nin sözlü rivayetlerden topladığı Sarı Saltuk menakibi*, 7 vols. (Cambridge 1974–1984); Ş. H. Akalın, *Saltuk-name*, 3 vols. (Ankara 1988–1990). For an analysis of the frontier narratives of medieval Anatolia, see C. Kafadar, *Between two worlds. The construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley 1995) 60–90.

13 Dedes, *Battalname* 1.

14 E. Jeffreys, *Digenis Akritis, the Grottaferrata and Escorial Versions* (Cambridge 1998). Many scholars compared and linked parts of the *Battalname* with other frontier narratives. H. Grégoire, 'The historical element in western and eastern epics. Digenis-Sayyid Battal-Dat-el-hemma-Antar-Chanson de Roland', *B* 16 (1944) 527–44; Georg Husing traced it back to the Persian legend Rustam; see *Beiträge zur Rostahmsage (Sajjid Battal)*, *Mythologische Bibliothek* 3 (Leipzig 1913). The Arabic legend of *Delhemma* has been identified as the primary source of the *Battalname*; see M. Canard, 'Delhamma, épopée arabe des guerres arabo-byzantines', *B* 10 (1935) 283–300; idem, 'Delhemma, Sayyid Battal et Omar Al-Noman', *B* 12 (1937) 183–8.

15 For the English translation and analytical edition of the poem, see G. J. Brault, *The Song of Roland* (Pennsylvania 1984). The poem was written in the eleventh century. The story relates the battle between Roland, marquis de frontier Bretagne, and the Saracens (i.e. Muslims) in the Pyrenees.

16 S. Duparc-Quioç, *La Chanson d'Antioche*, 2 vols. (Paris 1976–78).

17 N. R. Thorp, *The Old French Crusade Cycle 6: La Chanson de Jerusalem* (London 1992).

18 G. M. Myers, *The Old French Crusade Cycle 5: Les Chétifs* (London 1981).

most ancient epic poem written in medieval Castilian, reciting the adventures of Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, the hero of *la Reconquista* against the Muslims.¹⁹

Numerous Ottoman manuscripts, which date from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, as well as the lithograph editions in the nineteenth century,²⁰ show the popularity of the *Battalname*. Its popularity in the Ottoman empire was probably linked with the importance of Battal's cult among the ghazis and also among the Janissaries, who invoked the name of Battal before charging into battle and who read the *Battalname* as part of their training at Topkapı Palace.²¹ We also know that the tomb of Seyyid Battal Gazi, which was built in the early thirteenth century near Eskişehir, in the Byzantine Nacoleia in Phrygia,²² was one of the most important sites for the wandering dervishes until the seventeenth century. During the Republican period, from the 1940s until the 1970s, ten historical novels adapted from the *Battalname* were written. One of them was written by Abdullah Ziya Kozanoğlu; it had eleven editions between 1937 and 1976,²³ the others having at least two editions.

Seyyid Battal Gazi is identified as the Arab commander Abu Muhammad Abd Allah al-Battal of the Umayyad period who died in 740 during an Arab defeat at Akronion.²⁴ For several reasons suggested and explained by M. Canard and H. Grégoire, there was an 'epic transfer' in the Arabic legend of *Delhemma* in the twelfth century and consequently in the *Battalname*, where Umayyad Seyyid Battal of the eighth century was turned into a contemporary of the ninth-century Abbasid amir of Malatya.²⁵

The *Battalname* consists of multiple independent stories narrating heroic adventures of Battal Gazi. He embarks on campaigns against the infidels in the service of the amir of Malatya with the sanction of the caliph. Although Battal has adventures in the Maghreb and in India, most of the events take place in the centuries-old border zone between Byzantium and Islam, which stretched from Tarsus, along the Tarsus mountains, through Cilicia, and up to Malatya/Melitene. Battal goes to Constantinople once in the legend, disguising himself in monastic attire in order to rescue a Muslim warrior held

19 For the English translations, see W. S. Merwin, *The Poem of the Cid* (London 1959); I. Michael, R. Hamilton, J. Perry, *The Poem of the Cid. New Critical Edition of the Spanish Text* (Manchester 1975); L. B. Simpson, *The Poem of the Cid* (Berkeley 2006). The text was written in 1207 by Per Abad and preserved in a fourteenth-century codex. It is devoted to the epic adventures of Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, the conqueror of the kingdom of Valence.

20 For a list, see H. Köksal, *Battalnamelerde Tip ve Motif Yapısı* (Ankara 1984) 17–19, 21.

21 This testimony concerning the Janissaries, which comes from the Polish convert Bobovi, alias Ali Ufku Efendi, is quoted in Dedes, *Battalname* 23.

22 For the cross-examination of the tomb with the *Battalname* and the ideology behind its composition, see Z. Yürekli, *Architecture and hagiography in the Ottoman empire. The politics of the Bektashi shrines in the classical age*, Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies (Farnham 2012) 77–8.

23 A. Z. Kozanoğlu, *Battal Gazi Destanı*, 8th edn. (Istanbul 1965).

24 M. Canard, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 'al-Battal'.

25 H. Grégoire, 'Comment Sayyid Battal, martyr musulman du VIII^e siècle, est-il devenu, dans la légende, le contemporain d'Amer (d. 863)?', *B* 11 (1936) 571–5; M. Canard, 'Delhemma, Sayyid Battal et Omar al-Noman', *B* 12 (1937) 183–8.

in prison by the emperor and to meet a Byzantine princess who is in love with Battal.²⁶ Numerous women warriors, as well as Byzantine princesses, appear and fall in love with Battal. He marries many women and sometimes takes them to the battlefield to fight alongside him.²⁷ Monks and monasteries are prominent in the narrative. Although the main enemy is the caesar (*kaysar*), the Byzantine emperor and his sons and relatives whose main goal is to kill all the Muslims and put Mecca in ruins,²⁸ Battal is in a constant contact with the monks and the monasteries, trying unsuccessfully to convert them to Islam. However, there is a recurring story of a Sufi/monk, Şemmas and his monastery, the white marble monastery. Şemmas is a Sufi in the guise of a monk. He secretly wishes for the victory of Battal and throughout the narrative he acts as an 'intelligence service agent' for him. In the narrative, there is a common preoccupation with the miraculous.²⁹

The Byzantines in the narrative are called *Rumi* or infidels. The *Rum* or *Rum ili* (Roman/Byzantine lands) are depicted as very beautiful and fertile lands, full of water. There are many densely populated cities in these lands that are a short distance from one another. The people are kind and helpful; their only fault is that they are infidels.³⁰ While the monks are resistant to the idea of conversion, the Byzantine women and the Byzantine warriors are easily converted. In the narrative, we also see Muslim warriors who have been converted to Christianity and join the Byzantine army during the battles. The narrative identifies Battal and his companions as Sunnis or as Muslims, not as Turks, as we will see in the films below.

After having looked briefly at the fifteenth-century *Battalname*, I will now provide a brief summary of the films and show their resemblances and differences from the epic. The first film is the 'Legend of Battal Gazi'. Among the three films dealt with in this paper, this is the most faithful to the epic. Here the opening scene is similar to the *Battalname*. The Byzantines refuse to pay tribute to the amir of Malatya and kill Hüseyin Gazi, the father of Battal. Battal takes his revenge on the fourteen Byzantine lords who have killed his father. During his fights with the Byzantines, he duels with Hammer, the invincible Byzantine warrior. Battal and Hammer appreciate each other's strength and courage. Until this point the story is the same as the *Battalname*. However, while taking his revenge, Battal meets the Byzantine princess Elenora and they fall in love. Elenora begins to visit Battal in the forest, but she is caught one day on her way to meet him. In her place, a warrior comes to kill Battal, who runs away and then enters a monastery, which is called the monastery of forty virgins. In fact, it is not a monastery but a brothel. There Battal sees Hammer (Ahmer of the *Battalname*) with the most famous harlot of Anatolia, Faustina. Hammer and Battal decide to wrestle in front of

26 Dedes, *Battalname*, 390–8.

27 Ibid., 389.

28 Ibid., 367, 368, 521.

29 Ibid., 350, 360, 361, 404, 408, 430, 479.

30 Ibid., 336.

Faustina in order to show her which one is stronger. The one who loses will convert to the religion of the other. Hammer loses, converts to Islam and each man gives the other a nickname. This scene of wrestling and conversion of the loser to the other's religion is also present in the *Battalname*. Battal and Hammer become companions in arms and together they set off for Istanbul disguising themselves in monastic clothing to rescue Elenora. There, the Byzantines capture Battal and torture him. He will be saved by a group of beggars living in the underground cisterns. Their leader is in fact the legitimate Byzantine emperor and the real father of Elenora. After the brutal torture to which Battal has been exposed, the doctors in the underground palace of the beggar king heal him. Battal then saves Elenora from the hands of the wicked and false Byzantine emperor and hands over the crown to the beggar king, the legitimate emperor. And he marries Elenora who converts and becomes Ayşe Sultan.

The main difference of this script from the *Battalname* is the part concerning the beggars and the beggar king. This part can be found in an adaptation of the *Battalname*, written by Abdullah Ziya Kozanoğlu. Another difference between the epic and the film is that in the film most of the events take place in Istanbul. Natural settings are used, such as the Rumeli fortress, the church of the Myrelaion monastery, the underground cisterns, the aqueducts and the kiosk in the garden of the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul. In the film, we can hardly understand who the Byzantines were. It is noteworthy that they are not identified as Greeks or Rums. They are Christians; hence we see crosses on their clothes and in their palaces. They are rich and cruel. They are cruel not only to the Muslim Turks but also to their co-religionists. While the Byzantines are described as perfidious, cowardly, bitchy (*kahpe*), and treacherous and crow-faced, Battal Gazi is the hero of the poor, honest and oppressed Muslim Turks. He saves both the Christians and Muslims from torture at the hands of the Byzantines. Contrary to the hero of the *Battalname* who identifies himself as Sunni or Muslim, the hero of the film is a Turk. All the Turks in the film have a rural background. They are either peasants or nomads. Again in contrast with the *Battalname*, there is no miraculous aspect to the film, except Battal's super power. Battal in the film is monogamist, contrary to Battal of the *Battalname*. No conversion of Muslims to Christianity takes place in the film, only the Christians convert to Islam after they have been saved by Battal from their rulers' oppression.

In the films, 'The Son of Battal Gazi' and 'The Revenge of Battal Gazi', we see a Byzantine military sect of 'Black Knights' whose main goal is to conquer Anatolia and to convert its people to Christianity. Words such as 'motherland', 'flag' and 'martyrs dying in the name of the motherland' are used. Battal Gazi, who was the hero of the oppressed, rural, poor people, now becomes a national hero who defends his motherland against the Christian Knights. The stories of these two films have nothing to do with the epic *Battalname*. They are an interesting mixture, borrowed from the story of Moses hiding in a basket or from the legend of Excalibur. Fantasy figures such as pirates appear in some scenes.

The common theme in all of these films is the opposition between poor, rural and nomadic Turkish Muslim Battal against the urban and rich Christian Byzantines. The

conflict between Christians and Muslims is taken out of its original frontier environment and placed in a 'historical' city of Istanbul. The mutual influence and shifting loyalties between the two groups, which we can see in the *Battalname*, are omitted in the films. The Roman identity of the Byzantines is disregarded and they are portrayed as the oppressive inhabitants of 'historic' Istanbul, while Battal Gazi is represented as a Turkish version of Robin Hood.

Returning to the *Battalname*, we see that it is a Malatya based epic which deals with the conquest of *Rum ili*. Turkish newcomers to Anatolia in the twelfth century, who sought to relate and connect their activities with those of their fellow Muslim predecessors, appropriated this heroic Arab Muslim figure of the Muslim-Byzantine frontier. We can also consider it as an *éloge* of ghazi activity. The raider-commander families in the Ottoman empire, who were patrons in the renovation of the convent of Battal Gazi, were most probably related to the production of the *Battalname* in the fifteenth century.³¹ In fact, one can detect the 'ghazi' values and frontier ethos in the text. For example, the amir of Malatya, who represents the central authority, is helpless against the Byzantine army without Battal Gazi. Another allusion to the glorification of the ghazis in the narrative is the positive value attached to Battal's attitude with regard to the booty he acquires in the raids. He never keeps it to himself but instead distributes it to people and warriors around him. This attitude, stressed in the narrative, finds echoes in the anonymous Ottoman chronicles, which criticize the Ottoman rulers who began to keep a certain amount of the booty to create a state treasury.³²

The *Battalname* and its sequels *Danişmendname* and *Saltukname* are not purely imaginative works. In fact, they are even considered to be narratives of a historical nature.³³ In terms of Byzantium and the Byzantines, they provide quite accurate historical information. In the *Battalname*, as Kyriakides and Grégoire pointed out, there is a layered accumulation of historical facts on Byzantium for the period between the eighth and the eleventh centuries, such as the relation of Constantine Porphyrogennetos with the foundation of Lykandos by Melias; organization of *comitatenses* prior to the definitive organization of the themes; akritic fighting tactics on the frontiers.³⁴ The knowledge of Byzantine institutions, military practices, religion and beliefs do not

31 Yürekli, *Architecture and hagiography in the Ottoman empire*, 77–8, 126–33, 155–8.

32 Aşıkpaşaoğlu, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, ed. N. Atsız (Istanbul 1947) 129–30, 233–4; on booty and its distribution among the frontier lords and the Ottoman sultans, see I. Beldiceanu-Steinherr, 'En marge d'un acte concernant le pengyek et les aqıngı', *Revue des études islamiques* 38 (1969) 21–47, especially 38–41 on the history of *pençik* (it was a tax given by the frontier lords to the Ottoman rulers comprising 1/5 of the booty). For an analysis of the criticism against the creation of a state treasury from among the ghazi, see Kafadar, *Between two worlds*, 111–13, 139–50.

33 Kafadar, *Between two worlds*, 93.

34 S. P. Kyriakides, 'Éléments historiques byzantins dans le roman épique turc de Sayyid Battal', *B* 11 (1936) 563–70; H. Grégoire, 'The historical element in western and eastern epics. Digenis-Sayyid Battal-Dat-el-Hemma-Antar-Chanson de Roland', *B* 16/1 (1942/43) 527–44. For the perception of the Byzantines and Byzantium in the sequels of the *Battalname* and in the Muslim saints' lives, see B. K. Bayrı, *Martyrs and dervishes as witnesses: the transformation of Byzantine identity in the lands of Rum (thirteenth-fifteenth*

seem to be a result of erudite research on Byzantium but rather practical knowledge due to constant confrontation, changing sides and co-habitation. For the frontier warriors, not only for the Muslims but also for the Byzantine frontier lords such as Digenis, learning about and getting acquainted with how the 'other' lived and functioned was probably essential for their own survival and success in their endeavour. Apart from certain practical knowledge, these texts seem to be quite positive in their approach towards the Byzantines. In terms of their general attitude towards Byzantium, I believe that the Turkish frontier epics show a great divergence from the Turkish Ottoman historiography, which did not seem to be very interested in the Byzantine empire.³⁵

It is hard to know which *Battalname* manuscript the scriptwriters or film directors had in their hands as a guideline to their scripts. The beggar king part in the 'Legend of Battal Gazi' film suggests that the film script could be an adaptation from Kozanoğlu's novel. Although this film is the most faithful to the fifteenth-century written epic, and although some of the themes and clichés of the *Battalname* do exist in this and in the other two films, with the addition of new elements and changing of some of the original ones, the Arab hero fighting on the frontiers between Byzantium and Muslim lands is transformed into a belligerent Turkish hero. He now represents a group of nomad and rural Muslim Turks, fighting against the cruel, unjust, rich, Istanbul Christian Byzantines. Various historical facts and a relatively positive approach to the Byzantines, which is present in the epic, disappeared in the films. Although the religion of the Byzantines is stressed, with emphasis on the crusades and the Byzantine soldiers portrayed as Christian knights, we understand that for the scriptwriters there is no difference between the Byzantines and the western crusaders.³⁶

Continued

centuries) (PhD dissertation, Université de Paris 1-Panthéon Sorbonne and Boğaziçi University 2010) 183–233.

35 The Ottoman historians (or at least the Turkish speaking ones) were not much interested in Byzantine history. The earliest exception to this rule was Hüseyin Hezarfen in the seventeenth century. For the early Ottoman Turkish historiography, see S. Yerasimos, 'Byzance dans les chroniques ottomans (XIV^e-XVI^e siècle)', in *Byzance en Europe*, 19–29. For the late Ottoman period, see M. Ursinus, 'Byzantine history in late Ottoman Turkish historiography', *BMGS* 10 (1986) 211–22. For the perception of Rome, Byzantium and Constantinople in the seventeenth-century work of Hüseyin Hezarfen, who was probably the first historian to write a history of Byzantium, see C. Bekar, *A new perception of Rome, Byzantium and Constantinople in Hezarfen Hüseyin's Universal History* (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University 2011).

36 While the scriptwriters do not seem to be aware of the fact that the Byzantines never really developed the idea of Holy War and that there were no military orders in Byzantium, in the frontier narratives such as *Danışmendname* and *Saltukname* the distinction between the crusaders and the Byzantines is clearly made. While the Byzantines are called Rum, the crusaders are mentioned as Franks. In the *Saltukname*, it is the pope (*Papos*, *Babos* or *Filyon Firenk*) who unifies the Frank infidels against the Muslims. Akalin, *Saltuk-name*, I, 16. For a discussion of the idea of Holy War in Byzantium, see V. Laurent, 'L'idée de guerre sainte et la tradition byzantine', *Revue historique du sud-est Européen* 23 (1946) 72–98; A. Laiou, 'On just war in Byzantium', *Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis*, I (New York 1993) 153–77; J. Haldon, *Warfare, state and society in the Byzantine world, 565–1204* (London 1999) 13–33.

How and why did frontier warrior Seyyid Battal of Malatya become the 'Turkish Robin Hood' fighting against 'Western' Christians in Istanbul? And what kind of message were these films passing on?

I believe that Murat Belge's analysis of the 'historical' novels of the Turkish Republican period³⁷ can give us some clue. One can see recurring themes and *topoi* in these novels in terms of the characterization of the protagonists and of the antagonists alike, characterization that was utilized in the films of Battal Gazi. In fact, one must not only look at the Turkish films on Byzantium but rather a whole series of movies directed in this period, such as those on Atilla, Tarkan, Kara Murat³⁸ and others, to be able to grasp the message of these films. As in the 'historical' novels, in the 'historical' films of the period as well, the identity of the antagonist does not actually matter, he can be a Byzantine, Chinese, Italian or Arab, but he is always depicted as cruel, perfidious and unjust, while the Turkish hero whether Muslim or not yet Muslim is always belligerent and just.

In her article on Balkan cinema, Dina Iordanova³⁹ describes films that depict the Ottomans and Turks as oppressive, corrupt and treacherous villains,⁴⁰ as 'hushed narratives and discerning remembrance' and asks whose memory these films reflect. Most of these films date to the 1980s, a period of chaos and disintegration in the Balkans. It was also a time when 'slow-moving, lazy, poorly organized, autocratic, mystic and inefficient' Balkan states were compared with the 'dynamic, rational and pragmatic' Europe and countries such as Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Albania were deemed 'insufficiently European'. According to Iordanova, these films were trying to assert or even to prove that the Balkan countries were deemed suitable for status as 'European' but also that if they were not like the rest of Western Europe, it was because of having been for many centuries under the alien and destructive Ottoman rule. This conception was not new to the 1980s but goes back to the nation-state formation period of the Balkan countries. The themes of this earlier stage were recycled with a new meaning in the 1980s.

Whose memory do we find in the Battal Gazi films? I think the answer that Murat Belge gave for the novels applies to these films. It is the conscious or unconscious

37 M. Belge, *Genesis. Büyük Ulusal Anlatı ve Türklerin Kökeni* (Istanbul 2008).

38 Attila the Hun (434–453), the ruler of the Hun empire; Tarkan the Hun is a fictitious character who fights as a warrior in the name of the Huns. Sezgin Burak, a Turkish caricaturist, created the Tarkan character in 1966. According to Burak's story, Tarkan was left in the wilderness when he was a baby and was raised by wolves. In the films, a wolf always accompanies him. Kara Murat is also a fictitious character created by Rahmi Turan, journalist and novelist, who published 18 volumes of the Kara Murat series. He is a 'Turkish' warrior fighting for the early Ottoman sultans. As these 'historical' Kara Murat novels became extremely popular, several films were produced based on them. Among these films, the most famous is the 'Fatih'in Fedaisi' ('Warrior of the Conqueror').

39 D. Iordanova, 'Whose is this memory? Hushed narratives and discerning remembrance in Balkan cinema', *Cineaste* 32/3 (2007) 22–7.

40 Examples of such films are the Greek *1922* (1978), the Yugoslav *Banovic Strahinja* (1981), the Bulgarian *Vreme na nasilie* ('Time of Violence'm) (1988) or the Macedonian *Dust* (2001).

memory of the people of the Turkish Republic, who have lived through the traumatic process of the re-construction of their national identity while, following the '93 Russian war (1877–78),⁴¹ experiencing continuous military defeats, loss of territory and disintegration of an empire. This occurred at a time when 'Turks' were forced to listen to arguments issuing from the West about how the 'barbaric Turks' should return to their home in Central Asia. As a result of these developments, the Ottoman Muslim intellectuals and later those in the Turkish Republic attempted to re-identify themselves, searching to find the origins of the 'Turkish nation' in Central Asia, in the 'golden ages' of the foundation of the Ottoman empire or in the ancient Anatolian civilizations. The reflection of these attempts at self re-definition in popular literature was the image of a belligerent, just and xenophobic Turk versus oppressive, corrupt and treacherous villains.⁴²

What is interesting in these films however is that Byzantium serves to represent the 'West' and in none of them is there reference to the Byzantines as Greeks (*Yunan* or *Rum*). In the films, the Byzantines are seen praying in the churches in a language which sounds Greek and one can see Greek letters in these churches and on the mosaics but Greeks are never mentioned. When we think of the Turkish Independence war, which was fought against the Greek army in Anatolia in 1919–22, as the last movement of 'the fall of the Ottoman Empire', and the heavy impact it had on the formation of Turkish identity in the Republican period, one wonders why the Greeks are absent in these films. I believe that an article by Tanıl Bora on 'Why was enmity against the Greeks absent in the official republican ideology?'⁴³ may give us some clues. Bora argues that until the 1950s in the Turkish Republican official ideology, enmity against the Greeks was absent. During these first decades of the Turkish Republic, the 'other' par excellence was the 'Past,' the 'Old Turkey.' All efforts were directed at erasing the traces of 'Ottoman times' in memories (the old alphabet, the old dress codes, the old education system, the old music, the old 'religion'—hence the new 'religion' was now secularism—and so on) in order to create a new national Turkish identity. The enemy, the 'other' of the last decades of the Ottoman empire, was loosely defined as the 'West' and the Greeks were seen as part of this West, being rather a mere pawn of the 'West'. Enmity did exist but, according to Bora, it was suppressed not only in the official ideology but also in the consciousness of the people.

After the 1950s, however, during the government of the Democrat party, repressive measures for erasing the 'Past' were relaxed and some of the feelings and attitudes of the pre-Republican people re-emerged. The 'Past' was no longer the 'other' or the 'enemy'. This is one of the important reasons behind the boom in 'historical novels' and 'historical

41 The Russian-Ottoman War of 1877–78 is known in Turkey as the '93 Russian War as the years 1877–78 correspond to 1293 in the *Rumi* calendar, which is based on the Julian calendar but starts with the year of Muhammed's migration in 622. The calendar was used officially in the Ottoman empire after 1839.

42 For a detailed study of the reflection of 'identity crisis' in popular modern Turkish literature, see Belge, *Genesis*.

43 T. Bora, 'Resmi Metinlerde "Yunan Düşmanlığı" Neden Eksikti?', *Değer* 32 (1998) 35–42.

films' in the 1960s and 1970s. The secularist policies of the previous decades were relaxed during this period which made Islam much more prominent in everyday life in the cities. At the same time, these were the years when there was a massive migration from rural areas to the cities, where the culture of the countryside was becoming more visible through massive urbanization. While such changes were taking place internally, Turkish public opinion at first welcomed the outcome of intensified foreign contacts of the Turkish government with the United States and Europe. Subsequently, however, due to several conflicts with the 'West' over the Cuban missiles, opium production, Cyprus and the Armenian question, positive public opinion toward the 'West' turned to enmity.⁴⁴

Seyyid Battal Gazi appeared on the historical scene as the Arab commander Abu Muhammad Abd Allah al-Battal in the eighth century during the Umayyad period. In the twelfth century, in an Arabic frontier epic called *Delhemma*, he became the contemporary of an amir of Melitene of the Abbasid period. Again, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in the Turkish epic *Battalname*, he turned into the hero of the frontier lords, the ghazis. His heroic deeds and his cult continued to be popular among the raider-commanders and the janissaries of the Ottoman period. However, in the 1960s, when Battal Gazi appeared on movie screens, he was no longer the Arab Muslim frontier warrior in whose heroic deeds Turkish frontier lords saw the predecessors of their own endeavours. He was the Battal of the Turkish Republic, a belligerent, just and xenophobic Turk, who acquired these new characteristics through the traumatic process of national identity formation. He now had a rural background to attract the attention of movie audiences in the towns of the 1960s, that is, the newly urbanized population who felt oppressed in their new environment. The new Battal was no longer fighting on the borders of Byzantium and Islam for the conquest of Byzantine lands, but instead in Istanbul as a modern Robin Hood in the name of the poor and the oppressed. As Battal was transformed, so too were his adversaries, the Byzantines. They were no longer the residents of the historical Byzantium of the period between the eighth and eleventh centuries with whom there existed confrontation as well as symbiotic co-existence. They are no longer called *Rumi*, who were kind and helpful people, and whose only fault was being infidels. The Byzantines of the Battal films were now the urban, rich, cruel and unjust Christians. They were called *Bizanslı*, Byzantine. The language of nationalism such as 'motherland,' 'flag,' 'being martyred for the sake of the motherland', on the one hand, and the representation of the Byzantines as crusaders and members of military orders trying to convert Anatolia to Christianity, on the other, transformed the Byzantines into the adversaries of a recent past, the 'West' of the post First World War period against whom the enmity 'returned to conscious' within the political conjuncture of the post 1950s. While in the West the image of Byzantium was oriental, obscure and schismatic, it is this rich, cruel, urban Istanbul 'Western' Byzantine image which marked the contemporary perception of Byzantium in the minds of the ordinary people in Turkey.

44 E. J. Zürcher, *Turkey. A modern history* (London 1998) 231–76.

Nicosia and its municipal administration during the very early years of British rule in Cyprus

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There has been some controversy recently over the identity of the first mayor of Nicosia during British rule. This paper seeks to clarify the issue by putting it into context. What was Nicosia like between 1878 and 1882? What exactly do we mean by the words 'mayor' and 'municipal council'? How was the town administered then and how and to what extent did municipal procedures change in the subsequent years? The material researched suggests that the unusual circumstances of the occupation created a prolonged period of transition during which basic municipal functions were essentially directed by British officials. It was not until 1882 that a substantial shift from an Ottoman to a more British colonial form of administration took place. The resulting reforms provided the islanders with a judiciary independent of the executive, and a partially elected legislature. Nicosia was, on the whole, slower than the coastal towns to make the most of the opportunity for municipal self-government that the new legislation also offered.

Nicosia 1878–82

In July 1878 a seasoned soldier, Sir Garnet Wolseley, was sent to the island of Cyprus as High Commissioner to secure and establish the British occupation. He was not instructed to establish a British colonial administration, but a model Ottoman administration under Ottoman law. The island was to be a prototype for the British administration of the Sultan's domains in Western Asia of which the Cyprus Convention was the cornerstone.¹ Wolseley arrived in Nicosia in August 1878. He had only three civilian staff. They were senior advisors on finance, legal affairs, and customs. For the administration of the island, he was dependent on his own military officers. The observation and supervision of the Ottoman administrators and tax collectors, with a view to improved efficiency in both, were severely hampered by the fact that no one spoke English. The absence of a common language not only created problems in communication with the population and their Turkish-speaking administrators, but in the reading of the Ottoman administrative documents left behind in Nicosia. Translators were sent for from Constantinople but were very slow in arriving.

1 R. Holland and D. Markides, *The British and the Hellenes: Struggles for Mastery in the Eastern Mediterranean 1850-1960* (Oxford 2006) 164–5.

The small town the British took over in the summer of 1878 was enclosed within long grey walls 'like a gleaming girdle, clasped round a sleeping forest of minarets, palms and cypresses'.² How was it administered? It is clear from consular correspondence during the last years of Ottoman rule and from the early British district reports on Cyprus, that the translation of the Turkish terms used for administrative officials was not particularly consistent. Words tended to be translated according to the needs of the moment. The *medjlis/meclis* (council), which had vaguely administrative, or, in the British case, tax-collecting functions in a town, tended to be dubbed 'municipal council', while the governors of districts and subdistricts, *kaimakam* and *mudir*, were referred to, when appropriate, as mayors.³ This in itself is an indication that the office of mayor and municipal council, in the modern western sense, an official and a legal body, responsible for the administration of sanitation, utilities and recreation in the town as a whole, did not exist.

Generally, there was little corporate sense in Ottoman towns. There was no understanding of a town council as a legal entity, since such a legal body did not exist in Sheriat law on which Ottoman law was based.⁴ The main functioning unit of local authority, made legal by the Vilayet law 1867, was the elected *mukhtar* (village headman), or *mahalledjis* (headman of a quarter/neighbourhood in a town).⁵ Apart from the registration of births and deaths, until this day the duty of a *mukhtar*, with his council of elders, *demogerontes*, if they existed, was to collect the multiplicity of tithes and taxes on which Ottoman finances depended. It was important, therefore, for the units of administration to be small enough for the *mukhtar* to know the details of everybody's property and everybody's business. There was a tax on coffee grinding, for example. There were tithes on spun silk, honey, and every crop grown in the island – and crops *were* grown within the town and silk spun. Every walled garden had its mulberry tree. Nicosia was so sparsely populated in 1878 that it was extraordinarily rural.⁶ Cypriot village houses were interspersed among the ruins of magnificent Gothic structures,

2 W. H. Mallock, *In an Enchanted Island or A Winter's Retreat in Cyprus* (London 1889) 85.

3 Report of British Vice-Consul in Larnaca, 15 April 1867, for a parliamentary paper on Turkey, cited in H. Luke, *Cyprus under the Turks* (London 1969) 217 and 'Report on Polis Chrysochou', where the *mudir*, son of the *kaimakam* of the Papho *sanjak*, had 'also supervision of the customs guard and the municipality': [C. 2543], *Cyprus: Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Year 1879* (London 1880) 164.

4 The concept of a municipality as a legal corporation was not introduced into Turkish law until 1930. See B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 3rd edn (Oxford 2002) 393–400. More generally, E. Eldem, D. Goffman and B. Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir and Istanbul* (Cambridge 2001) discusses the extent to which some sort of a common identity did emerge in these cities, especially during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

5 Ibid., 398–9.

6 The population of Nicosia had halved during the three hundred years of Ottoman rule. At the end of Venetian rule (1571), it was 20,000 to 25,000. In 1878, it was little over 11,000. See B. Arbel, 'Cypriot Population under Venetian Rule (1453–1571): A Demographic Study', *Μελέται και Υπομνήματα*, 1 (1984) 184–214, 196–8, and the 1881 Census statistics, in M. Attalides, *Social Change and Urbanisation in Cyprus: A Study of Nicosia* (Nicosia 1981) 103.

Venetian palaces, Ottoman *tekkes*, *khans*, mosques and diminutive Greek Orthodox churches. A more substantial Ottoman administrative centre and a bazaar lay at its heart.⁷

Ottoman Nicosia (or Lefkosha) was not within a broader administrative district or *sanjak*, as the other towns were. It had a special status, isolated from Deghirmenlik, the district in which it lay, and was administered personally by the *mutesarraf*, the governor of the island. Its *medjlis idare* or administrative council, according to the British vice-consul, was the central *mejlis* of the whole island in 1867. He observed that the members of the central island *medjlis* were not representatives of the districts of the island, but were chosen from the town [Nicosia] itself. He went on to note that 'The Muslims having there been long in the ascendancy, are in the possession of considerable property and their exclusive spirit is always more or less animated by the presence of the government ... the members of which are constantly recruited from Constantinople.'⁸

That this situation continued through until 1878 is indicated by the reference, in the first annual report on Cyprus written by Sir Robert Biddulph in 1879, to the fact that because of its special status, the *mutesarraf* 'personally ruled the capital with the aid of [his] heads of departments'.⁹ This would be in line with the tendency of the Porte to hang on to central control of key towns, even after the introduction of reforming legislation in 1864 and 1870.¹⁰ The financial crisis within the empire in the 1870s would have reinforced the need to maintain a strict control over the collection of revenue.

More than any other Cypriot town, the capital was a guarded fortress. The force of Turkish soldiers garrisoned there was considered unusually large by Wolseley.¹¹ They were the guardians of the six treasury chests. All of the island's revenue, except customs dues, was collected in them until they were transferred under military escort to Constantinople. The treasury chests were kept in the governor's *konak* in the centre of Nicosia.

But there was a second reason for the fact that the city walls were guarded, day and night. The island was a place of exile and imprisonment for some of the empire's most hardened criminals. The more civilized offenders were exiled in Famagusta, also a walled city, but about three hundred convicts from all over the empire were imprisoned far from the sea, in the cellars and ground floor of the Serai, the governor's office and residence. During the day they were allowed to wander around the bazaar dragging

7 L. Salvator, *Levkosia: The Capital of Cyprus* (London 1983; original German edition Prague 1873), for a description of Nicosia towards the end of Ottoman rule. See also the plan of Nicosia drawn by Kitchener in 1881 for a graphic view of the extent of open space within the walls, D. Demi, *The Walled City of Nicosia: Typology Study* (Nicosia 1997) 44.

8 Luke, *Cyprus under the Turks*, 220.

9 [C.3092], *Cyprus: Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Year 1880* (London 1881) 3.

10 Lewis, *The Emergence*, 394–400. Under Sultan Abdulhamid (1876–1909), the office of prefecture (*Sehr-emanet*) and governor (*Vali*) of Istanbul had, in fact, been exercised by the same person.

11 A. Cavendish (ed.), *Cyprus 1878: The Journal of Garnet Wolseley* (Nicosia 1991) 28.

their heavy chains, seeking odd jobs for food.¹² The walls were therefore heavily guarded. The gates were closed from sunset to sunrise and a curfew imposed within the walls. On Fridays, the gates were closed for two hours during the day as well to allow the guards to attend the mosque for prayer.¹³ The town was, in fact, something of an open prison. This latter identity and its distance from the sea in an island where there was only one ill-kept carriage road, explains, at least in part, the absence of bustle in this small town. The fact that it was an extraordinarily silent place was noted by Cypriots and foreigners alike.¹⁴

One of Garnet Wolseley's first worries was to be rid of these prisoners and the Turkish garrison that guarded them.¹⁵ A month after his arrival, they were marched to Kyrenia, and from there shipped to Damascus. It was perhaps, this day, more than any other, which signalled the start of a new way of life for Nicosia. The city gates remained permanently open. The night curfew was lifted.

Nevertheless, the absence of an effective municipal administration was to worry British officials for some time yet. During the first years of British rule, Nicosia posed substantial sanitary problems, and a series of largely unsuccessful efforts were attempted to make its citizens responsible for improvements. The colonial government succeeded only in making the citizens of Nicosia pay, at least in part, for works carried out under British initiative and instruction, a move which caused much local resentment.

The town was well-supplied with water. Ottoman *evkaf* (religious trusts) had for centuries provided aqueducts and fountains, but in 1878 these were in a poor state of repair.¹⁶ Irrigation channels running down the centre of the street served as drains leading, as often as not, to the riverbed of the Pediaios, which still traversed the town from the Paphos to the Famagusta Gate. This was also a repository for carcasses of animals slaughtered within the walls and all manner of other waste matter. The pools of putrid water there, and in the moat, created by leaking aqueducts and the thriving but unsavoury tannery outside the Paphos Gate, all made the capital a smelly place. Wolseley described it as 'one great cesspit into which the filth of centuries has been poured'.¹⁷ He chose to live on a hill just beyond Ayioi Omoloyites, thus creating the impetus for the first cautious habitations beyond the walls that had contained the capital since Venetian rule, which had ended over three hundred years earlier.

There was no single body to address the issue of the sanitary distribution of the water supplies and management of waste. The religious trusts undertook responsibility

12 Salvator, *Levkosia*, 45, K. A. Constantinides, *Η Αγγλική Κατοχή της Κύπρου* (Nicosia 1930) 62.

13 Ibid., 51.

14 Ibid., 50–5 and Mallock, *In an Enchanted Island*, 85.

15 Cavendish, *Cyprus 1878*, 28.

16 See section entitled 'Water Vakfs' in N. Yildiz, 'The Vakf institution in Ottoman Cyprus', in M. Michael, M. Kappler and E. Gavriel (eds), *Ottoman Cyprus* (Wiesbaden 2009) 140–3. For the state of repair of the Nicosia water supply in 1878 see file entitled 'Water Commission 1878', SAO2: 335/78, CSA (State Archive of the Republic of Cyprus).

17 Cavendish, *Cyprus 1878*, 33.

for their own water sources, but there was no council responsible for the sanitation of the town as a whole. In Nicosia and elsewhere, the district commissioners co-opted existing tax-collecting, market-regulating councils, and sought to make them responsible for public health and sanitation in each town. They were more successful in Larnaca and Limassol than they were in Nicosia.

Larnaca was a special case. There the consuls and other foreign residents involved themselves in the town's administration in order to create a better quality of life for themselves. This was the common practice of foreign diplomatic missions and other European residents within the Ottoman Empire. Pera and Galata formed the first experimental modern municipalities in Constantinople for that reason, as early as 1859. Modern municipal administration did not begin to be established in the rest of Constantinople until 1878. Yet Alexandria, the cosmopolitan Egyptian city, could boast a functioning modern municipality by 1869. In more provincial areas, the implementation of reforming legislation, which did exist, always came up against the desire of the central government to retain complete control, a tendency assisted by the lack of willingness of the empire's urban population to pay any additional taxes in the interest of sanitation and public health.¹⁸

In Cyprus, the hijacking of existing tax-collecting councils by the British district commissioners for modern municipal purposes was provided with some sort of legal footing in January 1879. An ordinance published in the government *Gazette* that month provided that:

The functions, authority and powers of municipal councils, *Medjlis Belediye*, of the towns of Nicosia, Larnaca, Famagusta, Limassol, Kyrenia and Paphos as at present constituted, shall be maintained provided that no regulation passed by any municipal council shall have any force or effect until it has been enacted by the High Commissioner.¹⁹

Belediye is the modern Turkish word for municipal council, but although municipal legislation was enacted in the second half of the nineteenth century, attempts actually to introduce effective municipal government in the Ottoman Empire had been minimal. In most towns in the empire municipal government remained an alien concept. The law, *Vilayet Belediye Kanunu* of *Ramazan* 1294 (1877), the most recent municipal legislation, was enacted by the short-lived Ottoman parliament of the turbulent year that immediately preceded the British occupation of Cyprus. According to Bernard Lewis, it does not seem to have been enforced much and certainly was not fully enforced in any province of the Ottoman empire.²⁰ More research is needed on this subject, but it seems that we have here a case of the British attempting to use an Ottoman law, not taken very seriously by the Ottomans themselves, in order to create a body responsible, if

18 Lewis, *The Emergence*, 396; B. Lewis, 'Baladiyya', in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, I (Leiden 1986) 972–9.

19 *The Cyprus Gazette*, 17 January 1879, V21/20, CSA.

20 Lewis, *The Emergence*, 399.

not for carrying out a modern municipal function, at least for collecting money, which would allow the district commissioner together with the public works department to undertake essential basic municipal works. At any rate this is what happened in Nicosia.

The Nicosia *belediye* council that the British co-opted had been in place since the beginning of 1877, before the new Ottoman municipal legislation was enacted by the Ottoman parliament.²¹ It was therefore constituted more or less on the basis of the 1870 Ottoman municipal law from which the latter legislation derived. As in the other towns of Cyprus, its election, constitution and procedure were governed 'rather by custom' than the letter of the law.²² There were three elected Christian and three Muslim members, regardless of the proportion of Christian to Muslim citizens in each town. The central government appointed a president from among the elected councillors. The timing and procedure of elections varied considerably in different towns.²³ The Cypriot towns would not have been unusual in enforcing this law selectively and idiosyncratically. Lewis indicates that the 1870 municipal legislation generally remained a dead letter within the empire, although attempts were made in various places to implement part of the later municipal code of 1877.²⁴ One important difference between the 1870 and the 1877 Ottoman laws was the introduction of communally proportional representation in the latter.²⁵ This was not being enforced in Cyprus even after the British occupation. The district commissioners tended to be guided by the 1870 law, included in the French language edition of Ottoman legislation with which they had been furnished. The very recent (1877) legislation was not immediately available to them.²⁶ In the aftermath of the British occupation of Cyprus, the greater the efficiency exerted by the new rulers in the collection of municipal taxes to fund expensive infrastructural projects upon which they insisted, the more the urban Christians demanded a more substantial part in the decision-making process in municipal affairs.

In 1873 Louis Salvator had located the *belediye* offices within the bazaar and described the collecting of taxes as 'the only visible sign of municipal activity'.²⁷ After the British occupation, the Nicosia commissioner, or his deputy, attended all *belediye* meetings. The activities of this council, as described by Seager, the Nicosia commissioner,

21 In June 1879 Colonel White, then acting as Nicosia District Commissioner, reported to the Chief Secretary as follows: 'the whole council has served over the two years prescribed by Art.113, 29 Sewal 1287, page 36.' White was referring to the 1870 law as published in the French language by Gregoris Aristarchi Bey in *Législation Ottomane* (Constantinople 1873) 33. This was the edition of Ottoman Legislation, it seems, with which each British commissioner was provided. The author has in her possession a volume of this edition stamped with the official stamp of the commissioner of Famagusta.

22 See correspondence between the chief secretary and district commissioners – responses to an enquiry into how the municipalities and municipal elections were currently run from October to December 1879, SA1: 7533/79, CSA.

23 Ibid.

24 Lewis, *The Emergence*, 398–9.

25 Mitchell to Queen's Advocate, 15 December 1879, SA1: 7533, CSA.

26 See note 19.

27 Salvator, *Levkosia*, 69.

concentrated mainly on market regulation and the collection of bazaar taxes, fees for licences and fines. For example, a report on its activities in October 1879 refers only to abuse of the issue of licences for 'repairing buildings' and the tight regulation of the bazaar. 'Should anyone be detected selling bread at a less (sic) weight or higher price than that fixed, he is taken before the council and fined severely; the same if a butcher sells meat at a higher price.'²⁸

Given the rigid financial constraints under which Cyprus was to be administered, British officials needed to find local sources of funds for the municipal welfare of the towns which was, in 1878, sorely neglected.²⁹ It is clear that the funds pinpointed were those most minutely associated with the bazaar. *Rousoumat* (weighing) taxes derived from the ancient Islamic regulations of the market – *ihṭisab*. Wolseley separated these from the general revenue and allocated them to the *belediye* of each town in which they were collected to be used for municipal improvements and administration. He apparently took this action 'in pursuance of a then recent order of the Sultan which was found in the [Ottoman] governor's office in Nikosia'.³⁰ These taxes included:

- tax on the right of public weighing;
- tax on the right of measuring grain;
- stamps on cotton goods and leather manufactured in Nicosia;
- 2½ per cent on the sale of animals in towns;
- a monthly duty of 1½ per cent on shops.³¹

Logically, it was the body of men responsible for collecting these taxes that the British commissioners co-opted to work with them in conducting municipal affairs. It is clear from the research undertaken by George Dionysiou, that, even in Limassol, where the British found most cooperation, the district commissioner ruled the roost.³² In the 1879 Report, Falkland Warren noted that

There are completed remunerative works which insure funds for the continuation and completion of what has been commenced. These improvements are owing to the people themselves, who have carried out what I have urged and directed.³³

28 Seager to Queen's Advocate, 25 October 1879, SA1: 7533, CSA.

29 In 1877, the Ottoman Empire defaulted on the 1855 Crimean War loan which was guaranteed by the British and French Governments. The tribute paid to the Sultan (calculated at £92,800, more than half the average annual revenue of the island) was pledged, together with part of the Egyptian Tribute, for servicing this loan. The Cypriot tribute was therefore sequestered after 1878 by the British Treasury to pay the annual interest to the bondholders. See G. S. Georghallides, *A Political and Administrative History of Cyprus 1918–1926* (Nicosia 1979) 15–37.

30 Memorandum on the Finances and Administration of Cyprus, Enclosure No. 1, in Colonial Office to Treasury, 11 May 1883, [C – 3661] *Papers relating to the Administration and Finances of Cyprus*, 72.

31 Luke, *Cyprus under the Turks*, 226, for details of the *rousoumat* tax.

32 G. Dionysiou, 'Τα δημαρχεία στην Κύπρο επί Τουρκοκρατίας και στις αρχές της Αγγλικής κατοχής', *Κυπριακός Λόγος* 12.69–72 (1980) 303–11.

33 [C.2543], 41.

Warren was referring to the *rousoumat*. The port towns were to benefit a great deal more than Nicosia from this move. For example, the *rousoumat* taxes in 1884 amounted to:

Rousoumat [weighing taxes] 1884

Nicosia.....£321. 15s. 2cp.

Larnaca.....£774. 15s. 0cp.

Limassol.....£1,664. 15s. 3cp.

Source: The Cyprus Gazette, January 1884, 366–7.

The British were of necessity taking all the initiative in spending the money they insisted the *belediye* collected. This situation clearly irked its Christian members. Moreover, in Nicosia they complained that the *belediye* council was no longer legally constituted because it had sat for more than the two years provided for by the 1870 law, in accordance with which it had been constituted.³⁴ The British officials were less concerned with the legal status of the council than with the insanitary state of the town and the absence of any existing machinery to deal with it. All the evidence indicates that the initiatives for and supervision of municipal works between 1878 and 1882 were undertaken by the district officer. The funds were provided, as far as possible, by the *belediye*, but also, in some cases, by the Islamic pious foundation trust, *Evkaf*.³⁵ Much of the work was carried out by the public works department, sometimes regardless of the citizens' disapproval of the way their money was being spent.

Prisoners, whose labour was much used for public works, were 'at the service of the municipality when not needed for other duties'.³⁶ In this way, several of Nicosia's key roads had been macadamized by 1880. Similarly the first opening in the Venetian walls at Paphos Gate was completed in 1879. The new opening provided a direct route from Victoria Street, where many of the British officials lived, to the newly constructed secretariat. This was situated on the road to the new Government House recently erected at Ayioi Omoloyites. It was a measure, therefore, which could well have been perceived by the local citizens as an unnecessary expense incurred chiefly for the benefit of the British senior civil servants.³⁷

A further indication of the absence of effective local functioning municipalities was the establishment, during the first two years of the British administration, of two special commissions. These were ordered to regulate utilities which would normally be the responsibility of the municipality. Wolseley was particularly concerned to limit cases of the fever that had devastated his troops in their first year on the island, and 'the

34 See n.19.

35 *Evkaf* is the Ottoman plural of *Vakf*.

36 'Nicosia: Report on Public Works', [C.3385], *Cyprus: Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Year 1881* (London 1882) 30–1.

37 Dionysiou, 'Τα δημαρχεία', 308–9.

fever' (malaria) was associated with the presence of stagnant water, of which, as already observed, there was a great deal in Nicosia. Very soon after the British arrival, a special commission was appointed by the high commissioner to enquire into and regulate the water supply of the island's capital.

On the Nicosia Water Commission sat the district commissioner, the government engineer, the government medical officer, a delegate from the *Evkaf* who owned most of the fountains in the town, two delegates from the *medjlis belediye* who were expected to collect the newly regulated 'water measures', and a delegate from the *medjlis idare*. A first report, after a personal inspection by this commission, revealed the following: that the aqueducts were in a poor state of repair, everyone helped themselves to the water, that there was no control over waste water; no one was specifically responsible for the water supply and waste water of the town as a whole, only for individual fountains, and all revenue that was collected went to Constantinople.³⁸

The commission decided that all existing titles to the water supply were null and void, that the amount to be paid by all possessors of measures would be 300 piastres and that the amount charged would be paid to the *belediye* within fifteen days from the date of notification. In addition, an annual rate of 10 piastres would be charged after April 1879 (that is after repairs of the aqueducts were expected to have been completed) for each person per measure owned. A form was to be prepared by the *belediye* for certification of the possession of water measures.³⁹ There is no indication of the extent to which this system was implemented, but by 1880 the aqueducts had been repaired and most water in the city was distributed to the fountains in iron pipes.

The second commission was set up in 1880. By that time it had become clear that the Ottoman councils were not going to cover the work expected of a municipal council. An island-wide sanitary commissioner was appointed by the high commissioner, Wolseley's successor, Robert Biddulph. Many of his duties were municipal. He was, for example, responsible for

- the arrangements for the collection and disposal of surface refuse and house sullage;
- improvement, conservation and protection of the water supply;
- provision of sewerage or other means of removal of excrement together with the abolition of cesspits;
- free admission of air into the town by the widening of streets and, if possible, the lowering of walls, together with the planting of open spaces;
- structural improvement of private houses;
- regulation of cemeteries.⁴⁰

38 Report and correspondence of the Water Commission for October and November 1878, SAO2: 335/79, CSA.

39 Ibid. A 'water measure' indicated the right to divert water from the main water channel to a private property at a given time for a given time.

40 Memorandum on the Finances and Administration of Cyprus, Enclosure No. 1, in Colonial Office to Treasury, 11 May 1883, [C.3661], *Papers relating to the Administration and Finances of Cyprus*, 21–2.

These two commissions ceased to function in 1882 when municipal councils, with a legal responsibility for the supply of water and the management of waste, were elected according to the new municipal ordinance of that year.⁴¹

It was not only the inadequate funds and the alien nature of 'municipal responsibility' to the urban population of the tiny Cypriot towns that caused the failure of the initial attempt, during the first four years of British rule, to adapt Ottoman institutions to municipal needs. The Christian urban population was not slow to object to their lack of representation on the Ottoman councils, as it became clear that they had little say in what happened to the revenue paid by them for the improvement of the towns' utilities. At the same time, they found their traditional levers of patronage shrinking.

In his report for 1879, the Nicosia commissioner had expressed the opinion that the members of the *medjlis*, which he called the municipal council, were 'respectable men' and expressed the hope that '*with careful direction and supervision* (my italics)', they would work for the good of the whole town. It seems that the last thing the Christians wanted was 'careful direction and supervision' in the spending of their taxes. Nor did they want the continuation of a system that did not allow them due representation. From the middle of 1879, a year after the British occupation, Christian political pressure was brought to bear for an end to a system of municipal administration whereby the council essentially collected the funds and carried out the district officer's instructions. In July 1879, two of the three Christian Nicosia councilors in the *belediye* resigned. The district commissioner was instructed 'to carry on' as best he could. Elections were not to be held because the management of municipal affairs was under consideration by the central government.⁴²

Two months later, in August 1879, the last remaining Christian councillor in Nicosia, M. Theocharides, also resigned.⁴³ The district commissioner, Major Seager, sought instructions. People were asking, he reported, what steps would be taken to take the place of the 'very influential' Christians. He believed that the directive given his predecessor, 'to continue the duties as long as possible without any change', would be 'rendered impossible for any length of time' because of their resignation. Seager was instructed to carry on with the remaining members and call elections to replace those who had resigned 'according to the law laid down in the Code Ottomane'.⁴⁴ The events that followed became entangled with the Christian campaign to change the system. Seager attempted not only to replace those who had resigned, but to proceed with the election of a new council, for which there was no clear precedent and in which he, to some extent, set his own rules. The outcome, regarding his choice of

41 Ibid.

42 White to Chief Secretary, 15 June 1879, SAO2: 784A/79, CSA.

43 From district commissioner of Nicosia to Chief Secretary, 15 June 1879, *ibid.*, and reply from Chief Secretary: 'the municipality must carry on its duty with the remaining members'.

44 Seager to Chief Secretary, Falkland Warren, 20 August 1879 and Warren to Seager, 23 August 1879, *ibid.*

president of the council, or mayor, was hotly disputed both between and within the two religious communities. Seager reported the sequence of events as follows:

Everything went smoothly until the time for an election of a president and vice-president. On Monday morning last the 12 chosen members were to meet me – 11 appeared, 6 Christian and 5 Moslem, the former chose Paschal Constantinides, the latter Hilmi Effendi for the post of president. By article 4, the appointment of the president is vested in the executive and the choice was left to me. I referred back to the original voting papers and found Hilmi Effendi had been placed first by a large number of votes.

According to Seager, the Muslims insisted that the district commissioner's original choice, Hilmi Effendi, must be adhered to. However, a letter of protest at Hilmi's appointment, sent by Ahmet Barutçuzade to the High Commissioner and recently found by Aristides Coudounaris, seems to indicate that not all the Muslim councillors agreed with his choice. Barutçuzade claimed that he had received the same number of votes as Hilmi (25 each) and should have been appointed mayor. He also accused Hilmi of corruption.⁴⁵ The Christians refused to accept office unless the appointment of the president was re-enacted. This was in spite of the fact that Seager promised them that Hilmi would only remain in office for one year, after which Constantinides would be appointed. The new Nicosia *belediye* was thus doomed to the absence of Christian cooperation.

When Seager sought support from his government for his action, he was told he had no authority to make such a promise. The high commissioner insisted that the Ottoman Law be strictly adhered to in this matter and the Queen's Advocate advised that, according to the law, *Vilayet Belediye Kanunu* of *Ramazan* 1294 (1877):

Article 4 says *inter alia* that the municipal council shall be elected for the term of 4 years and that the president of the council shall be the member of the council who is chosen/nominated by the executive authority. Therefore, I advise that the choice is at the absolute discretion of the commissioner and also that the commissioner, having once made the selection and appointment, has exhausted his power and that the president he has chosen retains office for the duration.⁴⁶

Hilmi Effendi retained the position of president of the *Belediye* until 1882, but the election directed by Seager was not recorded in *The Cyprus Gazette*. Seager was immediately replaced as Nicosia commissioner by Major Gordon. Sir Robert Biddulph intensified his efforts to introduce legislation for the creation of reformed elected municipal corporations, the malfunctioning of the existing councils now exacerbated by Christian

45 Letter from Ahmet Barutçuzade to the High Commissioner, 29 December 1879, SA1: 9252/79, courtesy of Aristides Coudounaris.

46 Warren to Seager, Troodos, 11 October 1879 and Queen's Advocate to Warren, 10 October 1879, SA03: 1134/79, CSA.

political tactics. By the autumn of 1879, in the aftermath of the Christian discontent aroused by the election organized by Seager in Nicosia, the high commissioner was seeking information from the districts on the conduct of elections and other procedures in the *belediye* councils of all the towns in the island. The Queen's Advocate sent out a circular to the district commissioners asking how elections had been conducted since the British arrival. The lack of uniform response revealed a confusion of method, each town having its own idiosyncrasies. The district commissioner, Ronald Mitchell, reported, for example, that the choice of Limassol electors drawn from each quarter of the town was never questioned. 'In theory, everyone except *hamals* (porters or unskilled workers) has a say,' he observed, 'but custom rather than the exact letter of the law has guided the election of members and the proceedings of the municipal body.'⁴⁷ Regarding Nicosia, Seager observed characteristically that 'the late municipality was scarcely a representative body, but, under the direction of English officials, worked well'.⁴⁸ It was a uniform objection to the co-option of the *belediye* taxes by those English officials for their own expensive projects, as well as the absence of fairer representation, especially in the coastal towns which already had Christian majorities, that caused growing resentment. They sought the communally proportional representation provided for by the Ottoman law of 1877 but not yet enforced on the island.⁴⁹

Christian dissatisfaction with the state of municipal councils was taken up at a higher level. The only Christian member of the appointed legislative council, Theodoros Peristianis, resigned during 1881 together with many Christian municipal councillors.⁵⁰ Peristianis had been chiefly involved with organizing the first of many Pancyprrian Memorials to be received by the British government in London.⁵¹ It was signed by Archbishop Sofronios and fifty-four Christian representatives from all over the island. This memorial, delivered to the high commissioner towards the end of 1879, devoted considerable space to complaints about municipal government. It sought greater representation generally and, specifically, municipal councils that were independent of the central government. In it the memorialists referred to the non-implementation of the new 1877 Ottoman law for local authorities. They complained that

In nearly all the councils, the district commissioners have imposed almost useless works costing large sums of money, without the consent of the councillors. Therefore some municipalities have been burdened with huge debts and all have been

47 See correspondence between the chief secretary and district commissioners – responses to an enquiry into how the municipalities and municipal elections were currently run in October 1879, SA1: 7533, CSA.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid., especially Mitchell to Queen's Advocate, 9 December 1879.

50 For a biographical note on Peristianis see A. Coudounaris, *Βιογραφικόν Λεξικόν Κυπρίων 1800–1920* (Nicosia 2010) 476.

51 A Memorial, that is a statement of facts as a basis for a petition to the monarch or his or her representatives, was the main form of political protest organized by Cypriot political and religious leaders during the early years of British rule.

weighed down with taxes which are intolerable and disproportionate to their pitiable situation, because of which the inhabitants are indignant⁵²

The resignation of Peristianis from the legislative council, and of the *belediye* councillors in most towns, was part of the same Pancyprrian campaign. Even in Limassol, the Christians were refusing to cooperate in the old system at the end of 1879.⁵³ In December of that year, the district commissioner, Mitchell, reported

Some months ago the Christian members resigned. The next three down the list replaced them. These also resigned and since that time, the municipality has possessed only one Christian member viz the President, Carides. From this period dates the state of discontent on the part of the christian element respecting municipal elections.⁵⁴

With the resignation of so many Christian members throughout the island, and all of those in Nicosia, the old system, such as it was, had fallen apart. In the town of Larnaca which, because of its important consular residents, was more functional than most, by 1881, not a single municipal councillor remained. The mayor was obliged to carry on without a council until May, when he also resigned.⁵⁵ Until the new municipal legislation was in place, the towns were essentially run by their district commissioners.

Between 1879 and 1882 there were repeated references to the high official expectations regarding the new British municipal legislation, the drafting of which began in 1880. For example, the high commissioner, Robert Biddulph, worrying about public health in the towns in June 1882, believed the large outbreak of fever that year to be due to

preventable causes. These can only be remedied by more active and intelligent municipal efforts. I trust that the reform of the municipal councils lately effected by legislative authority will incite to more active steps.⁵⁶

Echoing this view, the government engineer noted in the same report that

52 FO Correspondence in [C.4319], June to December 1879, 140–70 cited in G. Hill, *A History of Cyprus*, IV (Cambridge 1952) 417. See also K. Tornarides, *Η τοπική αυτοδιοίκησης εν Κύπρω* (Nicosia, no date), part III. Tornarides concludes that the 1877 Vilayet law was not enforced in Cyprus. See also F. Zannetos, *Ιστορία της νήσου Κύπρου από της Αγγλικής Κατοχής μέχρι σήμερα*, II (Larnaca 1911) 149–50.

53 See file SAO3: 1361/79, CSA, August to December 1879, headed 'Christian population report reasons for not attending the meeting announced by the municipality for the election of three Christian members'.

54 See correspondence between the chief secretary and district commissioners – responses to an enquiry into how the municipalities and municipal elections were currently run in October 1879, file SAO1: 7533/79, CSA.

55 'Report for the Larnaca District', [C.3772], *Cyprus: Report by Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Year 1882* (London 1883) 85.

56 Biddulph to Kimberley, June 24 1881, [C.3385], 13. The high commissioner is referring to the 1882 Municipal Ordinance.

little has been done to improve the streets or sanitary condition of the towns, matters which I would fain hope may receive the earnest attention of the Municipal Authorities, as soon as these are reorganized.⁵⁷

The reform to which the British officials were looking forward with such high and hopeful expectations was the result of several factors: the failure of the attempt to create a system of effective, self-funding municipal administration out of existing institutions, the political pressure created by the Greek Christian resignations, and the impetus created by the policies of the new Liberal government in London.

Nicosia 1882–95

The years 1882 to 1895 brought about radical changes in administrative institutions, but the proper functioning of these reforms, which were new and alien to the island, took longer to establish. 1880 saw the fall from power of the government of Benjamin Disraeli, the prime minister who had promoted the acquisition of the island by Britain. The new Liberal government under William Gladstone abandoned the plans for the British administration of Ottoman Asia. Indeed, Gladstone described them as ‘insane’. Although, in terms of international status, the island remained an Ottoman province, after 1880 the change in government in London resulted in a shift from attempts simply to oversee and ‘purify’ Ottoman administrative structures, to the introduction of three new important British institutions of government: a partially-elected legislature, a judiciary independent of the administration, and elected municipal councils which were legal corporations.⁵⁸ The drafting and ratification of this legislation took some time. It began in 1880, but was not completed until 1882. The new legislation took so long, in part because of the time-lag required for ratification by London, and partly because the intended main source of revenue, English-style town property rates for householders, electoral lists and clearly-defined municipal boundaries required time-consuming house-to-house preparation. In June 1880 a draft municipal ordinance was drawn up and in July 1880 the high commissioner ordered each municipality to conduct a census of the adult male population within its boundaries as defined by that ordinance,⁵⁹ but by 1881, the decision had been made in London that the draft legislation must be repealed and re-written.⁶⁰ Subsequent delays were exacerbated by the fact that the law had to be printed in London because there was as yet no government printing press in Cyprus.⁶¹

57 [C.3385], 31.

58 ‘We are not so much to reform Turkish law and institutions as to purify them’: entry in Wolseley’s diary for Saturday, 17 August 1878. See Cavendish, *Cyprus 1878*, 51.

59 *The Cyprus Gazette*, 22 June 1880 and 7 July 1880, V21/2, CSA.

60 See file on Foreign Office and Colonial Office dispatch respecting the Municipal Councils Ordinance which is to be repealed and re-enacted, SA1: 7543, CSA.

61 Letter from Chief Secretary to Crown Agents forwarding a draft of the Municipal Councils Ordinance requesting them to print twenty copies, November 1881, SA1: 7546/81, CSA.

The Municipal Councils Ordinance of 1882 was finally enacted in May of that year. It provided for municipal councils elected by communally proportional representation. In doing so, this new Cypriot law reinforced the provision for proportional representation which first appeared in Ottoman law in 1877, just before the British takeover, and was perceived by the Christians on the island as a substantial advance on the 'equal' communal representation of earlier years. All rate-paying adult males were eligible to vote. Although the 1882 ordinance provided that 'the recording of votes and the persons entitled to be elected councillors be conducted in the same manner as municipal elections have hitherto been conducted in the island', the Municipal Councils Amendment Law of 1889 ordered that if a poll were required it would be taken by ballot.⁶² Those who paid over 20 shillings in municipal taxes could stand as candidates for municipal councillor. These councils would now be responsible before Cypriot law for the maintenance and lighting of the streets, for the sanitary state of the towns and for the management of its water supply and waste disposal. The municipal boundaries were set for this election at 'a circle drawn at a distance of five hundred yards beyond the salient angles of the bastions of the fortifications'.⁶³ Here was official acknowledgement that Nicosia was beginning to expand beyond the Venetian walls that had contained it since the sixteenth century. The ratio of Muslims to Christians in the town was more or less equal. A total electorate of males over 20 years of age was divided into 1786 Christians and 1638 Muslims.⁶⁴ They were to elect twelve councillors, six Muslim and six Christian. The councillors would, at their first council meeting, elect their president or mayor.⁶⁵ There was to be no mandatory presence of a government official at council meetings except at the first electoral one.

Convening the first council meeting, at which the mayor of the town would be elected by the councillors, proved to be extremely difficult. The municipal elections had taken place in July. This meant that in the following weeks, the hottest in the year, the Nicosia commissioner, Captain James Inglis, would have great difficulty in gathering together all the newly-elected councillors, especially as two of them, one Christian and one Muslim, resigned and had to be replaced. It was not until November 1882 that King was able to report the election by the new communally balanced Nicosia town council, of Christodoulos Severis as president, or mayor, and Hadji Hafuz Effendi as vice-president, or vice-mayor.

Unfortunately, in contrast to Limassol, whose elected council was roundly praised by the British administration, the new elected council of Nicosia could not get its act

62 Order for Municipal elections by the high commissioner, Sir Walter Sendall, *The Cyprus Gazette*, 29 June 1895, V21/20, CSA.

63 *The Cyprus Gazette* 26 June 1882, V21/2, CSA.

64 *The Cyprus Gazette*, 16 June 1882, V21/2, CSA.

65 Municipal Ordinance 1882 in *The Cyprus Gazette*, Supplement, 6 May 1882, V21/2. This was a modification of a municipal ordinance drawn up in 1881. See also *The Cyprus Gazette*, 26 June 1882 for the number of councillors allocated to the municipal council in the six main towns, V21/2, CSA. In 1895 the ratio of Christian to Muslim councillors was adjusted.

together. The main reason seems to have been its inability to collect the new household rates. This failure was not peculiar to Nicosia, but the capital, having no port, did not have such lucrative *rousoumat* weighing fees to fall back on. The trade fees collected in the bazaar and other miscellaneous taxes were not enough for the council to be able to carry out the duties to which it was now legally bound.

Nor was the Nicosia council alone in finding difficulties. The new system was not working uniformly well. There were some favourable reports for Limassol, Kyrenia and Paphos, but generally the new system was not producing the expected results.⁶⁶ The post of sanitary commissioner had been annulled and the chief medical officer was at the end of 1882 complaining that

It is to be regretted that the execution and supervision of the ordinary sanitary arrangements lies solely with the municipal corporations who, for the greater part, exist only in name.⁶⁷

In 1884, despairing at the inactivity displayed by the elected Nicosia council, the high commissioner ordered the Queen's Advocate, William Collyer, to compile a report on its affairs. The report concluded that the council had found it impossible to assess every citizen with accuracy for the payment of town rates because of a blanket objection to them, especially among the wealthier citizens. There was a general refusal to collaborate. As a result, electoral lists, which were based on the lists of ratepayers, had not been drawn up, as the law required, every two years, and the council was now illegal. According to Collyer, the council members willingly resigned, more than a little relieved to be thus unburdened.⁶⁸ The affairs of the town were once again undertaken by the district commissioner with the help of Christodoulos Severis and Hadji Hafuz Effendi, both of whom had assisted Collyer in his enquiry. This was in accordance with new legislation designed to ensure that the towns could be legally administered if the elected council resigned. The law, named the Municipal Councils Law 1885, provided that, in cases where there was no duly qualified council, the high commissioner would appoint a Municipal Commission 'to exercise and perform the duties of the council'. It was considered necessary because Nicosia was not the only town with a municipal council that was floundering and a way had to be found for municipal affairs to be regulated in the absence of a legally elected council. The attempt to collect town rates was more or less abandoned. As a result, the Nicosia municipality, unable to exploit port weighing dues, was exceptionally penny-pinched.

The Municipal Ordinance of 1885 provided an opportunity for the Muslim councillors this time, to use resignation as a political weapon. As the Greek Christian population in Nicosia rapidly increased at the expense of the Muslim population, they were able to

66 See District Reports in [C.4188], *Cyprus: Report of Her Majesty's High Commissioner for 1883* (London 1884) 65–91.

67 'Chief Medical Officer's Report', [C.3772], 35.

68 Report by W. R. Collyer on the municipality of Nicosia, *The Cyprus Gazette* (Extraordinary), 11 December 1884, V21/2, CSA.

prevent the existence of municipal councils under the control of the Christian majority, by resigning.

In 1888 Achilleas Liassides was elected mayor by the Christian councillors of Nicosia, who were by now in the majority.⁶⁹ The Muslim councillors immediately resigned, denying the council a quorum and thus making it illegal. It was replaced by an appointed municipal commission under the presidency of the district commissioner, as provided for by the Municipal Ordinance of 1885. This situation continued for seven years, until 1895. Although the appointed municipal commission was not at all popular, in 1895 it did succeed in completing a major piece of municipal infrastructure: the insanitary, smelly river-bed which traversed the centre of the town was covered over to become a stone storm drain. It was not until two years later, however, that it was effectively sluiced by being connected to the Arab Ahmet aqueduct. Liassides, first as the Christian member of the appointed board, then as elected mayor, was the local driving force behind this move. It remains, until this day, the town's main storm drain.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, on the whole, the appointed municipal commission functioned no better than its elected predecessor. In 1893 and 1894 the Christian citizens of Nicosia again began agitating for municipal elections. A new government enquiry into the affairs, this time of the appointed municipal commission, found it wanting. Municipal taxes were not successfully collected, even from the rich. The example is given in the report of George Papadopoulos, a wealthy citizen who was at that time paying a fortune to erect a beautiful new theatre in the old city, but refused to pay for a building licence.⁷¹ In other words the appointed council was no more successful at collecting taxes than its elected predecessor.

The Christian citizens, particularly, were pressing for an elected council. In 1895 elections took place and Achilleas Liassides, who had been the Christian member of the appointed municipal commission in the intervening years, was once again elected mayor by the Christian councillors. The Muslim councillors once again resigned to prevent a quorum. The acting high commissioner, Arthur Young, clearly aggravated by these obstructive Muslim tactics, appointed Achilleas Liassides, who had, after all, been elected, president of the subsequent municipal commission. He made a point of not following the precedent of appointing the district commissioner as president. One of the main objectives in the colonial government's decision to proceed to elections had been that, as the enquiry had demonstrated, the district commissioner simply did not have time to run the municipality's affairs. When a delegation of Muslim citizens protested at the appointment of Liassides and demanded that he be replaced by an Englishman, they received short shrift.

69 Achilleas Liassides was an up-and-coming Nicosia politician. He was close to Archbishop Sofronios. In 1886 he was elected a member of the Legislative Council of which he became a leading light, going on to become, in 1897, the first Cypriot member of the Executive Council. See Coudounaris, *Βιογραφικόν Λεξικόν*, 305.

70 SA1: 181/93, CSA.

71 Report of Enquiry into Municipal Affairs, *The Cyprus Gazette*, 4 January 1895, 2620, V21/22, CSA.

This is a duty that the government has found from experience, can no longer be fairly imposed on an English official, for the time of every English official is so fully occupied with the work of his own post that he cannot devote that attention to municipal affairs which his appointment as President of the Municipal Commission would require ... In selecting Mr. Liassides as President, the government considers that it has acted in the best interests of the town and the [Muslim] community. I am directed to add that it was in consequence of the action of the Mohammedan gentlemen who were lately elected members of the Municipal Council and their subsequent resignation that compelled the government to appoint a Commission in order to carry out the affairs of the municipality.⁷²

Liassides remained the appointed president of the municipal commission until new municipal elections were held in 1897, at which he was once again elected mayor. This time the Muslim councillors did not resign. It had become clear after the previous municipal election in 1895 that the resignation of the Muslim councillors would no longer prevent the town council being led by a Christian mayor. The year 1895 was thus a watershed in the municipal administration of Nicosia, in that it was the year in which the district commissioner was absolved of municipal duties and obligations, which were put firmly in the hands of the local municipal council.

Epilogue

In the following years, with responsibility for the municipal affairs of the town now in local hands, seats on the municipal council would become fiercely contested. Between 1895 and 1914 the impetus for reform stimulated by the establishment of new elected institutions, the civic space they created and the political competitiveness they encouraged, together with a rapid growth in literacy and the emergence of a money economy, resulted in a transformation of urban Cypriot society. A new middle class had emerged and was already becoming embroiled in local politics. By the turn of the century, the now constitutionally elected municipal councils had begun to function more efficiently and the sense of a town as a unified legal body to which all citizens belonged, was gaining ground. Political rivalry introduced through elections for the legislature and municipal councils over this period was fomented by the new flourishing newspaper trade and the creation of 'Reading Clubs', which sought to engage the working man in middle class politics.

These attempts to foster the support of the working people were made by an increasingly divided middle class. The old establishment was, by the turn of the century, even in conservative Nicosia, on the defensive against the more radical new grouping of young professionals, mostly teachers and lawyers. The vibrancy of local politics in Nicosia by the 1890s, in contrast to the apathy accorded the first elections to the legislative council in 1883, is a measure of the transformation in society that was taking place

72 Correspondence and minutes in SA1: 1458/95, CSA.

under the new dispensation. The 1880 municipal legislation continued to provide the framework for municipal affairs in a town whose expectations of it were growing.

Achilleas Liassides, mayor of a communally mixed elected council from 1897, weathered the storms created by the growing politicization of middle-class Nicosia until the municipal elections of 1908. The death of Archbishop Sofronios in 1900 had focused the growing electoral rivalry of the two Greek Christian factions into a protracted struggle for the vacant archiepiscopal throne. It was not resolved until 1910. It permeated not only church politics but municipal elections, elections for the legislative council and elections for school committees. The issue thus dominated Nicosia society for the first decade of the twentieth century. Broadly speaking, the supporters of the candidacy of the bishop of Kition (Κιτιάκοι) represented the more radical enotists, while the supporters of the candidacy of the bishop of Kyrenia (Κυρηνειακοί) represented the pro-establishment conservatives with a more gradualist approach to the underlying national aspiration of union with Greece. The results of the municipal elections in April 1908 reflected the tight competition between these two factions. Three *Kyreneiakoi* and three *Kitiakoi* councillors were elected. These six Greek Christian councillors failed to agree upon a common candidate so the candidate of the five Muslim-elected councillors, Mehmet Sevkett Bodamyalızade, became mayor and remained mayor for a full term. The resolution of the archiepiscopal issue in 1910 allowed the election, once more, of Achilleas Liassides as mayor, by the Nicosia council, in 1911.⁷³

The rapid increase in the Christian population in Nicosia in the following years steadied the electoral procedure, and the municipal councils gradually established firmer roots. They developed and flourished, on the whole, working effectively for the welfare of their citizens, regardless of creed.⁷⁴ By the turn of the century, municipal affairs as well as the election of councillors had been put on a regular footing, and the communally-mixed municipal councils became an important feature of the towns they administered. The district commissioners increasingly left urban affairs to the local councils and concentrated their own efforts on rural areas. The 1882 municipal legislation remained the basis of municipal government on the island until new modern legislation was introduced in 1930. Representation at municipal level was curtailed by the suspension of the constitution in the wake of the riots in October 1931, but most of the elected councillors continued to serve on the communally proportionate councils until elected representation was once again introduced at a municipal level in 1943.

73 For further information regarding these elections, see D. Markides, 'Nicosia under British rule', in D. Michaelides (ed.), *Historic Nicosia* (Nicosia 2012) 327–400.

74 As late as 1958 a report written by the veteran colonial civil servant, John Surridge, on municipal affairs emphasized the successful and harmonious nature of communally mixed municipal administration from the early years of British rule. See 'Cyprus: The Report of the Municipal Commission', 1958, CO926/805, The National Archives, Kew.

‘Peasantist nationalism’ in inter-war Greece (1927–41)

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‘Peasantist nationalism’ was a new radical nationalist discourse in the twentieth century. The crisis in agriculture in the 1920s, urbanism and the perceived overpopulation of the cities were important social factors that instigated the intellectual construction of the ‘peasantist nation’. Peasantist nationalism was by and large constructed by agronomists, a new stratum of technocrats who used nationalism as a vehicle for social mobility and their entry into the strata of the organic intellectuals of the bourgeoisie. Peasantist nationalist ideas, set forth earlier by the agronomists, were adopted by Metaxas’ quasi-fascist regime and upgraded to the level of the state’s hegemonic ideology.

Introduction

In this article, I will argue that ‘peasantist nationalism’ (a term coined in 1995 by Irina Livezeanu for the relevant case of Romania, see below) was a novel discourse of Greek nationalism that made its appearance and flourished in the inter-war period. Peasantist nationalism primarily drew on radical agrarianism and neo-romanticism. Agrarianism¹ was disseminated along with the rise of the forces of peasant populism. Since the late nineteenth century, agrarian parties, which intended to elevate the peasantry to a determinant socio-political position, were established throughout Central and Eastern Europe. After World War I, radical land reform and the emancipation of the peasantry became part of the modernizing government programmes even of highly conservative regimes in the area.² The emergence of the peasant as an active factor in the political and social life of Europe, particularly in the agrarian East, was a striking phenomenon in

1 The underlying notion of agrarianism is the idea that agriculture and those whose occupation involves agriculture are especially important and valuable elements of society; see J. A. Montmarquet, *The Idea of Agrarianism: From Hunter-Gatherer to Agrarian Radical in Western Culture* (Moscow, ID 1989) viii. For a definition of the left-of-centre agrarianist ideology, see entry for the Bulgarian agrarian leader G. M. (‘Gemeto’) Dimitrov in F. Gross (ed.), *European Ideologies: A Survey of 20th Century Political Ideas* (New York 1948) 44–53. For the principles of agrarianism on the right of the political spectrum, see M. McNaylor, ‘Agrarianism’, in R. P. Carlisle (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Politics*, II (*The Right*) (Thousand Oaks, CA, London and New Delhi 2005) 504–6.

2 I. T. Berend, *Decades of Crisis: Central and Eastern Europe before World War II* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 2001 [1998]) 76, 287–9, 292.

the social history of the continent between the two World Wars.³ In Greece, an Agrarian Party was founded in 1923. However, factionalist misgivings, the petit-bourgeois aspirations of the Greek peasant masses as well as the clientelist networks of the established bourgeois parties left very limited ground for its success.⁴ Yet, agrarianism exerted a far greater intellectual influence on the hegemonic ideology of inter-war Greece than the fluctuating electoral influence of the Agrarian Party of Greece (which actually seldom exceeded 6%).⁵

This was certainly not the first time that the peasantry entered the discourse of ideological developments and practical politics in modern Greece. From 1830 onwards, Greek scholars centred their concept of the cultural continuity of Hellenism around the rural population; they saw folklore as the great repository of the true Greek character. Greek folklorists, historians and philologists particularly shaped nineteenth-century notions of romantic nationalism, such as the Herderian 'national spirit' (*Volksgeist*), and the tenets of Greek national identity along peasantist lines: if it could be shown that the peasants, the largest demographic element, retained clear cultural traces of their ancient heritage, a link between the modern Greeks and the glory that was ancient Greece would be demonstrated. Within this context of nation-building, the 'primordial unity' of the Greek nation was testified in collections of folk songs, proverbs, legends, traditions, etc.⁶ However, peasantist nationalism constituted, I believe, a radical departure from the past romantic discourse, which was more concerned with ideals and portrayals of an imagined past rather than with the economic and sociological realities of the present.⁷ In the 'short twentieth century' (1914–91), neo-romantic perceptions of the reality exceeded the mere veneration of nature and the simple life, a key characteristic of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century romanticism:⁸ they developed into a new irrationalistic philosophy centred upon an actual cult of the peasant.⁹ Most remarkably, the scope of agrarianist populism was not confined to folk culture but expanded to a fundamentally politicized view of the farmers as a social class, represented genuine rural interests, and aimed at establishing the peasantry as an independent socio-political force with an increasing sense of its own standing, interests and purpose of

3 D. Mitrany, *Marx against the Peasant: A Study in Social Dogmatism* (New York 1961) 31.

4 A. Rigos, *H B' Ελληνική Δημοκρατία 1924–1935: Κοινωνικές διαστάσεις της πολιτικής σκηνής* (Athens 1992) 151, 156–7; D. G. Panagiotopoulos, *Αγροτικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος: Όψεις του αγροτικού κινήματος στην Ελλάδα* (Athens 2010) 50–9, 136–9.

5 Panagiotopoulos, *Αγροτικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος*, 132.

6 M. Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece* (Austin, TX 1982) 6–7, 13, 40, 52–3, 60–1; A. Politis, *Ρομαντικά χρόνια: Ιδεολογίες και νοοτροπίες στην Ελλάδα του 1830–1880*, 3rd edn (Athens 2008) 48–50, 55–6, 60; P. Mackridge, *Language and National Identity in Greece 1766–1976* (Oxford 2009) 1–2, 18–19.

7 Cf. Montmarquet, *The Idea of Agrarianism*, 183–4, 214–16.

8 Cf. I. Berlin, *The Roots of Romanticism* (London 2000) 17, 134; D. Stevens, *Romanticism* (Cambridge 2004) 16, 20.

9 G. L. Mosse, *Masses and Man: Nationalist and Fascist Perceptions of Reality* (New York 1980) 196–200; Berend, *Decades of Crisis*, 292.

action.¹⁰ Social changes definitely had a deep effect on neo-romantic peasantist thinking. Similarly to western European Romantics of the first half of the nineteenth century, who became attracted to nature as a result of the rapid growth of the population of their metropolises,¹¹ twentieth-century neo-romantic thinkers saw the accelerating growth of the Moloch-like industrial cities as an imminent threat to social stability and 'moral hygiene'. This influenced explicit policies of the radical Right (and of early National Socialism) towards plans for the reagrarization of society.¹² At the same time, agrarianist ideology came to the fore in the 1920s as a practical answer to real socio-economic exigencies.

The rural crisis of the 1920s

The inter-war period was generally characterized by a worldwide agricultural crisis, which hit European agriculture particularly hard. The Depression of the 1930s was preceded by a slump in agricultural prices because of increasing surplus productivity, particularly in the Americas. Recurring global crises in the rural economy, peaking in 1924 and in 1928, were severe and contributed to the downward spiral in the early 1930s. As output rose, prices declined and farmers clamoured for protection. Worst affected in Europe were the producers of staple commodities such as wheat.¹³ In 1925–29, the international index price of wheat decreased by 28%.¹⁴ The downswing in agriculture hit the Balkan national economies badly, since agricultural products were their main export commodities.¹⁵ In Greece, between 1927 and 1931, the index price of wheat fell from 151 to 117.¹⁶ The income of Greek farmers contracted accordingly to below the national average, reaching the limits of poverty. In 1927, the average income per 'agro-pastoralist' family in Greece was \$282.40, while the median household

10 Cf. Mitraný, *Marx against the Peasant*, 32; N. Oren, *Revolution Administered: Agrarianism and Communism in Bulgaria* (Baltimore and London 1973) 5–6, 9–10, 12, 14; Montmarquet, *The Idea of Agrarianism*, 228; Berend, *Decades of Crisis*, 83.

11 Stevens, *Romanticism*, 24.

12 Radical schemes for rural resettlement of town labourers and for turning Germany into a country of peasants lurked in the Nazis' early economic platform of 1932, drafted by the economist Gottfried Feder; see R. Grunberger, *A Social History of the Third Reich* (Harmondsworth 1977) 197, 200–1, 208; A. Barkai, *Nazi Economics: Ideology, Theory, and Policy* (New Haven and London 1990) 59, 148, 154.

13 C. Evelpidis, *Η γεωργική κρίσις ιδία εν Ελλάδι* (Athens 1931) 8, 10, 21–3; F. B. Tipton and R. Aldrich, *An Economic and Social History of Europe, 1890–1939* (Basingstoke and London 1988) 165–6; G. Ambrosius and W. H. Hubbard, *A Social and Economic History of Twentieth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA 1989) 169.

14 G. Candeloro, *Storia dell'Italia moderna*, vol. IX (*Il fascismo e le sue guerre*) (Milan 1990) 121.

15 J. R. Lampe and M. R. Jackson, *Balkan Economic History, 1550–1950: From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations* (Bloomington 1982) 434–5, 466–7.

16 K. Kostis, *Αγροτική οικονομία και Γεωργική Τράπεζα: Οψεις της ελληνικής οικονομίας στο Μεσοπόλεμο (1919–1928): Τα τεκμήρια* (Athens 1990) 43, Table 14.

income of the entire Greek population amounted to \$377.90.¹⁷ The decrease in agricultural income was also coupled with a fall in average productivity (until 1931), as well as with the indebtedness of the farmers to banks and money lenders. The indebtedness of Greek peasants deepened in the 1930s. In 1937, agricultural debts reached 43.3% of the gross agricultural income and involved 70% of Greek farmers.¹⁸

Farmers in Greece responded to the economic crisis by forsaking their plots and emigrating to the towns. Undoubtedly, urbanism was not a novel phenomenon in Greece. In the 'long nineteenth century', a steady stream of migration to the towns (or to the Americas up to 1922) offered an outlet for the overflow of labour from the countryside.¹⁹ In the inter-war period this migratory stream widened. The agrarian reform of 1917, which turned the landless peasantry and the refugees settled in the countryside into independent smallholders, did not put an end to, or reverse this demographic trend. The new smallholders did not succeed in turning themselves into successful entrepreneurs, while the economic slump worsened the commercial environment in agriculture. Thus, seeing no future prospects in agriculture, Greek farmers themselves migrated or encouraged their (male) offspring to move to the towns.

The perceived overpopulation of Greece's capital, which sharpened the divide between rich and poor, was mainly a consequence of the urban settlement of approximately half of the 1.2 million Asia Minor refugees in its suburbs after 1923.²⁰ Nevertheless, internal migration expanded the dimensions of this demographic overflow. Grigorios Chatzivasileiou, a professor of statistics at the School of Hygiene at the University of Athens, was the first person to point out in 1925 a 'problem of overpopulation' in Greece. He connected this problem first and foremost with the 'refugee issue', but also with the urbanism of the farmers.²¹ Between 1928 and 1940, the population of the 'capital complex' (i.e. Athens and Piraeus) increased by 40.2%, increasing from 802,000 to 1,124,109.²² Around 200,000 of these urban new settlers were internal migrants from the rural areas.²³ The migratory flow was strongest (in descending order) from the islands of the Aegean and the Ionian, from the Peloponnese, from Epirus, from Crete, from Sterea Hellas, and from Thrace, whereas in Thessaly and in Macedonia this outflow was minimal.²⁴ Around one quarter of the annual

17 C. Evelpidis, 'Η γεωργία εις τα Βαλκάνια', *Εργασία* 1 (11 Jan. 1930) 27.

18 K. Kostis, *Αγροτική οικονομία και Γεωργική Τράπεζα: Όψεις της ελληνικής οικονομίας στο Μεσοπόλεμο (1919–1928)* (Athens 1987) 48–9, 58, 137–8; S. Petmezas, 'Αγροτική οικονομία', in C. Hadziiosif (ed.), *Ιστορία της Ελλάδας του 20ού αιώνα*, II, part 1 (Athens 2002) 215.

19 G. B. Dertilis, *Ιστορία του ελληνικού κράτους 1830–1920*, 3rd edn, I (Athens 2005) 238–45.

20 L. Leontidou, *Πόλεις της σιωπής: Εργατικός εποικισμός της Αθήνας και του Πειραιά, 1909–1940* (Athens 1989) 189.

21 G. P. Chatzivasileiou, 'Το πρόβλημα του πληθυσμού εν Ελλάδι', *Αρχείον Οικονομικών και Κοινωνικών Επιστημών* 5/3 (July–Sept. 1925) 257, 260, 262–4.

22 N. C. Settas, *Το δημογραφικόν και το κοινωνικο-οικονομικόν πρόβλημα της Ελλάδος* (Athens 1964) 23.

23 A. Delendas and I. Magioros, *Πώς τίθεται το Ελληνικόν πρόβλημα* (Athens 1946) 30–1.

24 *Ibid.*, 32.

growth rate of the population of the countryside (15.47% in 1931–35) was lost to the towns. Between 1928 and 1940, the real growth of the population of the capital complex (27 per thousand) was more than five times its natural growth (5 per thousand).²⁵

By the mid-1920s, the soaring volume of internal migration and its social repercussions had alarmed state officials and the bourgeois establishment. By 1926 agronomists and the Ministry of Agriculture entered the public discussion, expressing their concern about the social dangers of the 'plethoric increase' in the population of the capital and suggesting that only a 'return to agricultural work' could save the urban centres from 'dangerous elements', i.e. the disaffected migrants who were attracted to communism.²⁶ Living and working conditions in the urban areas deteriorated, as Greece's anaemic labour market could not possibly absorb the newcomers.²⁷ Despite the seemingly high rates of the country's industrial development of 8% on average between 1933 and 1939,²⁸ employment in industry increased by merely 10%, while the absolute number of industrial workers rose from 280,311 in 1930 to just over 350,000 in 1938.²⁹ Harsh working conditions and low wages deepened the disaffection of the working classes and rendered communist ideas more appealing.³⁰ The peasant migrants, however, ignored the widespread unemployment in the towns and the fact that there was no margin for subsistence as there was in the villages.³¹

The arguments of the agronomists eventually found a receptive audience in the ruling political circles. State intervention in agriculture became more energetic after the eruption of the world economic crisis in October 1929, which worsened the situation for the farmers and intensified their migratory trend. In the early 1930s, proposed measures for retaining the farmers in the countryside and/or for the (re)turn of the 'parasitic' urban population to agriculture entered the epicentre of the public political debate.³² In 1930, the Liberal party Senator for the Rhodope prefecture, Achilles Kalevras, argued that

those petit bourgeois settlements that surround the towns, these miserable hovels that are erected around the old towns will become, in a decade's time, sooner or later, the nucleus of the leftist trends; briefly speaking, they will form the nucleus

25 Ibid.

26 V. Ganossis, 'Προς τους αγρούς', *Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος* 17 (1 Aug. 1926) 1.

27 C. Evelpidis, *Θεωρία και πράξις αγροτικής πολιτικής και οικονομίας*, I (Athens 1939) 207.

28 M. Mazower, *Greece and the Inter-War Economic Crisis* (Oxford 1991) 237, 250–1.

29 P. Pizanias, *Οι φτωχοί των πόλεων: Η τεχνογνωσία της επιβίωσης στην Ελλάδα το Μεσοπόλεμο* (Athens 1993) 25–6.

30 A. Liakos, *Εργασία και πολιτική στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου: Το Διεθνές Γραφείο Εργασίας και η ανάδυση των κοινωνικών θεσμών* (Athens 1993) 452.

31 Mazower, *Greece*, 241.

32 M. M. Psalidopoulos, *Η κρίση του 1929 και οι Έλληνες οικονομολόγοι: Συμβολή στην ιστορία της οικονομικής σκέψης στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου* (Athens 1989) 353–6.

of revolutionary Greece. These people are now struggling in order to make a living. What about when they will not be able to do even that?

Kalevras maintained that the flight of the peasants ('the deserters from the most honest human labour') could only be addressed by the 'new agrarian ideal of Greece'. By this he meant a 'systematic crusade for the Greek village' and the Venizelist 'pro-agrarian campaign'.³³ In March 1930, the general secretary of the Ministry of National Economy identified the Greek problem of urbanism with the German term *Landflucht* (meaning the desertion of peasants from the fields and their flight into the towns), and accordingly argued that Greece was facing a 'crisis of overpopulation' in its urban areas.³⁴ In fact, *Landflucht* was a rather general phenomenon that afflicted a wide range of societies in Europe (France, Italy, Germany, Norway, Finland, et al.) at the time, although not Britain.³⁵ In Greece, however, the urbanization of agriculturalists was still far from assuming the dimensions of a rural exodus, but was alarming because of its social repercussions.

The rural settlement of the refugees from 1923 onwards was the first and most important measure that was implemented at the time to prevent the overcrowding of the cities and their job market, and to inhibit social upheaval³⁶ (or, in Babis Alivizatos' words, to forestall 'a social and economic catastrophe').³⁷ Another significant programme for curbing urbanization was the rigorous and progressive agrarian policy set out by the Liberal government between 1928 and 1932, which aimed (within the wider agenda of achieving sustainable growth in the agricultural sector) to increase agricultural income and to improve living conditions in the countryside. In 1928, a second Advanced School of Agriculture was established in Thessaloniki, while the one in Athens was upgraded to university level. In 1929, the Agricultural Bank of Greece was founded, the Ministry of Agriculture was restructured, the Agricultural Funds and Chambers were decentralized, and six Agricultural Preparatory Schools were established throughout the country.³⁸ To this end, in October 1931, the Venizelos government passed a five-year moratorium on repayment of the farmers' private loans, a pro-agrarian

33 A. Kalevras, *Αστυφιλία, παρασιτισμός και μικροαστική εγκατάστασις* (Thessaloniki 1930) 11, 14, 41–2, 44.

34 P. E. Garoufalas, 'Ο υπερπληθυσμός των πόλεων', *Εργασία* 8 (1 March 1930) 17.

35 Tipton and Aldrich, *An Economic and Social History*, 241–2, 245; Ambrosius and Hubbard, *A Social and Economic History*, 56–60.

36 M. Dritsa, *Βιομηχανία και τράπεζες στην Ελλάδα του Μεσοπολέμου* (Athens 1990) 304–6; E. Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The Rural Settlement of Refugees 1922–1930* (Oxford 2006) 125–6.

37 B. Alivizatos, 'Δημοκρατία και γεωργία: Ο απολογισμός μίας δεκαετίας (1924–1934)', *Εργασία* 230 (27 May 1934) 667–8.

38 P. Petridis (ed.), *Το έργο της κυβερνήσεως Βενιζέλου κατά την τετραετία 1928–1932: Τι υπεσχέθη προεκλογικώς και τι επραγματοποίησε* (Thessaloniki 2000) 150–3, 183–6, 228–36; D. G. Panagiotopoulos, *Γεωργική εκπαίδευση και ανάπτυξη. Η Ανωτάτη Γεωπονική Σχολή Αθηνών στην ελληνική κοινωνία 1920–1960* (Athens 2004) 66–7, 69–71.

gesture that was repeated by the Metaxas government in 1937 on a more generous (twelve-year) basis.³⁹ Nevertheless, the most drastic interventionist measure for strengthening the agrarian income and discouraging the farmers from migrating was the concentration of cereals in 1927 and the passing of law 3598 'for the protection of the native wheat production' in 1928.⁴⁰ Law 3598 served a crucial social and political purpose. On 25 November 1930, the Liberal MP for Florina, Georgios Modis, explained in parliament that the artificial increase in the price of native wheat alleviated the 'most serious fear for the solidity of our social regime', because otherwise the destitution of the Greek wheat-growers would have led to a class revolution of the 'Russian type'. Another Liberal MP added that the protectionist measures satisfied the 'sense of self-preservation of the bourgeois camp', since 'the foundations of the Greek State lie deep in the soil, in agriculture'.⁴¹ Furthermore, this law marked the strategic orientation of Greece towards autarky in wheat and other nutritional products,⁴² while at the same time it became a powerful institutional lever for the dynamic entry of the agronomists into the forefront of the country's public and intellectual life.

Urbanism and the Greek agronomists

The arrival of the professional agronomists onto the scene materialized in 1927, the year in which, according to the economist Aristotelis Sideris, a rigorous 'centrally-directed' state intervention in agriculture began on the initiative of Alexandros Papanastasiou, the Minister of Agriculture in Zaimis' 'ecumenical' government.⁴³ Dimitrios Zographos, a historiographer of Greek agriculture, notes that before the last decade of the nineteenth century agronomists, along with 'every other person devoted to agriculture and the agricultural regeneration of Greece', were looked down upon with contempt, and the agronomists' 'great national-cum-social mission' had not yet been recognized. Due to the overwhelming social drive towards state employment, the still few (and mostly self-employed) agronomists were considered as 'socially backward' and were not allowed 'to have pretensions to the top of the social pyramid'. Before the early 1890s, the profession of agronomist was 'on the periphery of social life' and those young men who decided to follow it had to be real 'heroes'.⁴⁴ The situation changed substantially once

39 K. Vergopoulos, *Το αγροτικό ζήτημα στην Ελλάδα: Το πρόβλημα της κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης της γεωργίας* (Athens 1975) 161; Mazower, *Greece*, 133, 248–9, 291.

40 A. D. Sideris, *Η γεωργική πολιτική της Ελλάδος κατά την λήξαν εκατονταετία (1833–1933)* (Athens 1934) 278, 280, 320–1. The concentration of cereals means the collection, at times of agricultural crisis, of the whole or part of the native cereal production by the state, with the consent of the producers, at 'security prices', i.e. prices which are rather higher than the market prices, in order to secure a sufficient agricultural income.

41 *Εφημερίς των Συζητήσεων της Βουλής* (15 Nov. 1930–13 July 1931) 92–5.

42 C. Agriantoni, 'Venizelos and economic policy', in P. M. Kitromilides (ed.), *Eleftherios Venizelos: The Trials of Statesmanship* (Edinburgh 2006) 303–4.

43 Cf. Sideris, *Η γεωργική πολιτική*, 10, 263–4.

44 D. L. Zographos, *Ιστορία της ελληνικής γεωργίας*, I (Athens 1976) 342–4.

Spyros Chasiotis, the ‘father of Greek agriculture’ and an agronomist by trade, came to the fore and publicized the scope of his professional group. He did this through his periodicals *Georgiki Proodos*, 1892–96, and *Nea Geoponika*, 1900–27, and more particularly after the establishment of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1917, where Chasiotis served as General Director, and of the Advanced School of Agronomy at Athens in 1920, which was directed by Chasiotis until 1925. The establishment of the pertinent Ministry and of the School offered public employment to dozens of young graduate agronomists (from abroad, mostly from France), whose number significantly increased from 39 in 1919 to 486 in 1937, and a sense of mission in the members of their group. In the minds of many professors at the School, agronomy was not a mere technical application (a ‘practical science’), but rather (in Panagiotis Anagnostopoulos’ words, published in *Αγροτική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια* in 1934) ‘a wider Economic Science that deals with the realization of the greatest possible profits by means of complex combinations with the earth’.⁴⁵

In 1927, Greek agronomists commenced promoting the return ‘towards Mother Earth’,⁴⁶ and the ‘gradual securing of the country’s self-sufficiency in foodstuffs’.⁴⁷ The technocratic endeavours towards Greece’s autarky in grain and other nourishing agricultural products served two essential purposes: a) the improvement of the country’s trade deficit and conserving foreign currency and gold reserves;⁴⁸ b) the restriction of urbanization and the *Landflucht* phenomenon. As for the former aim, it should be taken into account that the trade deficit, and the consequent valuable exchange flowing out of the country, was mostly due to the shortfall in wheat production.⁴⁹ In 1926, the value of grain and flour imported by Greece reached £10,000,000, while the total budget deficit amounted to £18,000,000.⁵⁰ In 1927, wheat and flour imports covered 41.9% of the country’s trade deficit.⁵¹ The Liberal government claimed that by decreasing the amount of wheat imports in 1929–31 it had managed to save more than £2,000,000.⁵² The increase in native wheat production became even more vital after the country’s bankruptcy in April 1932, which brought foreign imports to a standstill.⁵³ Thus, in 1932, the country’s ‘agricultural autarky’ became a national issue of prime importance, tantamount to the feeding and the survival of the native

45 B. Alivizatos, *Κράτος και γεωργική πολιτική* (Athens 1938) 61; Panagiotopoulos, *Γεωργική εκπαίδευση και ανάπτυξη*, 32–3, 55, 78, 114, 118–19 (fn. 201), 171, 250; D. P. Sotiropoulos and D. Panagiotopoulos, ‘Ειδικοί διανοούμενοι και θύλακες χειραφέτησης στο Μεσοπόλεμο: Μεταρρυθμιστές γεωπόννοι και μηχανικοί στην ύπαιθρο και στο άστυ’, *Μνήμων* 29 (2008) 134.

46 E. A. Nikolaidis, ‘Το πρόγραμμά μας’, *Αγροτική Ζωή* 1 (Feb. 1927) 1.

47 S. Iasemidis, ‘Η ελληνική γεωργία και η σημασία της’, *Οικονομικός Ταχυδρόμος* 76 (27 Sept. 1927) 6.

48 Anotaton Oikonomikon Symvoulion (AOS), *Τα μέτρα προς επαύξησιν της εγχωρίου σιτοπαραγωγής*, I (Athens 1934) 46.

49 A. K. Mylonas, ‘Άς εμπνευσθώμεν από την πνοήν των αγρών’, *Αγροτική Ζωή* 1 (Feb. 1927) 2; *Αγροτική Ζωή* 8 (Sept. 1927) 1, 4.

50 *Γεωργικόν Δελτίον* (of the Greek Agrarian Society) 204 (Nov. 1928) 1904.

51 N. H. Anagnostopoulos, *Σιτοκαλλιέργεια και σιτάρχεια εν Ελλάδι* (Athens 1930) 6.

52 Petridis (ed.), *Το έργο της κυβερνήσεως Βενιζέλου*, 190.

53 Mazower, *Greece*, 88–91, 276.

population.⁵⁴ The Greek effort towards nutritional independence, the so-called 'wheat battle' (*μάχη του σίτου*), admittedly (clearly and openly acknowledged by most commentators who recognize the intervention of the state in agriculture) drew on Mussolini's *Battaglia del Grano*, which had been inaugurated in Italy in 1925.⁵⁵ However, before 1936, Greek self-sufficiency policies in agriculture had followed the Italian example along technical rather than ideological lines. Mussolini's Italy was certainly a powerful symbol in the minds of several interventionist-minded Greek civil servants, as a largely successful way of winning the battle for agricultural self-sufficiency.⁵⁶

This innovative policy of rigorous state intervention in the rural economy naturally enhanced the role and raised the profile of the agronomists. From the late 1920s onwards, agronomists publicized the issue of urbanism (*αστυφιλία*) and deplored the economic adversity of the peasants. In 1927, the agronomist Nikolaos Anagnostopoulos identified urbanism, i.e. 'the noticeable concentration of people in the towns and the reduction of the population of the countryside', as one of the country's major problems.⁵⁷ In 1929, the League of Athens Scientific Agronomists, personified by Stavros Papandreou, Chrysos Evelpidis, Nikolaos Anagnostopoulos and Panagiotis Dekazos, submitted a public memorandum to the Venizelos government, in which they stressed that 'the strengthening of agriculture is essential from a social point of view, since only in this way can we combat urbanism, which has increased dangerously in our country'.⁵⁸ On 10 December 1930, Senator Panagiotis Dekazos, an agronomist by profession and chairman of the Greek Agrarian Society (*Ελληνική Γεωργική Εταιρεία*), warned that the low revenue from agriculture inflated urbanism at a time when Greece, because of the insufficient development of its commerce and industry, could not sustain a plethora of urban dwellers. For that matter, he stressed that it was in the best interests of the national economy, as well as of society, that farmers remained in the countryside 'by all possible means'.⁵⁹ In 1931, the general secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Ioannis Karamanos, opined that the migration of rural dwellers to the cities would most likely bring them in touch with 'extremist elements' and would possibly endanger the social equilibrium of the country.⁶⁰ That same year, Chrysos Evelpidis, another illustrious agronomist, warned of the imminent peril of an 'untreatable social crisis which would be the natural

54 Evelpidis, *Θεωρία και πράξις*, I, 299.

55 K. D. Karavidas, *Αγροτικά. Έρευνα επί της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής μορφολογίας εν Ελλάδι και εν ταις γειτονικαίς σλαβικάις χώραις. Μελέτη συγκριτική* (Athens 1931) 138, n. 1; G. Ch. Modis, 'Η σιτάρκεια', *Εργασία* 200 (29 Oct. 1933) 1542. See also Kostis, *Αγροτική οικονομία* (Athens 1987) 42; Mazower, *Greece*, 241.

56 Cf. Mazower, *Greece*, 241.

57 N. H. Anagnostopoulos, 'Ουρμπανισμός και η ερήμωσις της υπαίθρου', in P. Dekazos (ed.), *Η πύκνωσις των αγροτικών μας πληθυσμών και τα μέσα της επιτυχίας αυτής* (Athens 1927) 44.

58 Syndesmos ton en Athinais Epistimonon Georponon, *Πώς θα επιτύχη η γεωργική πρόοδος του τόπου: Υπόμνημα προς την κυβέρνησιν* (Athens 1929) 1.

59 P. A. Dekazos, *Αγορεύσεις εν τη Γερουσία των Ελλήνων (1929–1931)* (Athens 1932) 152, 155, 158.

60 Mazower, *Greece*, 133–4.

outcome of the abandonment of the fields by superfluous farmers'.⁶¹ The main concern of the agronomists, in parallel with the country's political elite, was not only the danger of political radicalization of the 'superfluous' or 'unemployed' peasants per se, but also the prevention of an uncontrollable rural exodus that would most certainly 'asphyxiate' the labour market and exacerbate social and political disaffection in the major towns.⁶²

After the introduction of state intervention in agriculture, the main printed vehicles for the propagation of the agronomists' concerns were the illustrated magazines *Agrotiki Zoi* and *Nea Agrotiki Zoi* (February 1927–March 1935),⁶³ *Agrotikos Tachydromos* (1912–61),⁶⁴ *Agrotiki Engyklopaideia* (1934–35),⁶⁵ and the *Deltion* (Bulletin), as well as the 'popular pamphlets' of the Greek Agrarian Society (established in 1901). These journals, which were the most eloquent and expressive of a peasantist nationalist discourse, were written in the vernacular (demotic) and aimed to address a peasant audience. The influence of these propagandist works on the rural population cannot be definitively assessed. However, the Greek Agrarian Society claimed that between 1926 and 1936 it published 147 pamphlets and sold, or distributed without payment, 420,000 copies of them.⁶⁶ The editor of *Agrotiki Zoi* maintained in mid-1927 that her journal was selling 10,000 copies monthly, 9,000 of which to farmers.⁶⁷

The common agenda of these journals was 'agricultural enlightenment; the popularization of knowledge from all the branches of agriculture; and the elevation of the cultural level of the agrarian folk'.⁶⁸ The agrarianist discourse of these publications, which were edited in their entirety by professional agronomists, was, from the very beginning, over-politicized and assumed overt nationalist connotations. The ideological backdrop of their over-political rhetoric may be defined as radical agrarianism. The narrative of this radical agrarianist propaganda quickly developed into a novel type of nationalist ideology, which may be identified as peasantist nationalism. This radical agrarianist and nationalist preaching, which (naively) aimed at persuading the peasants to remain in their profession, was in accord with the 'stable and well-thought-out agrarian programme'

61 Evelpidis, *Η γεωργική κρίσις*, 54.

62 Dritsa, *Βιομηχανία και τράπεζες*, 54.

63 *Agrotiki Zoi* was a private venture published by a woman scholar, Eleni Politaki. It was edited by Nikolaos H. Anagnostopoulos, an agronomist and founder of the Advanced School of Agriculture in Thessaloniki (est. 1927). In April 1930, the journal was renamed *Nea Agrotiki Zoi*.

64 *Agrotikos Tachydromos* was issued by Greek Chemical Products and Fertilizers (A.E.), which belonged to the industrialist Nikolaos Kanellopoulos. It was edited by the agronomist Aristeidis Th. Mouratoglous.

65 *Agrotiki Engyklopaideia* was a publication of the Agrarian Democratic Party led by Alexandros Mylonas, a lawyer by profession. Its editorial board comprised the following distinguished agronomists: Spyros Chasiotis, Chrysos Evelpidis, Panagiotis Anagnostopoulos, Vasileios Ganosis, Emmanouil Anasis and P. Koutsomitsopoulos.

66 P. A. Dekazos, *Η υπό την προεδρίαν της Α.Μ. του Βασιλέως Ελληνική Γεωργική Εταιρεία 1901–1937: Η ιστορία της, η δράσις της* (Athens 1937) 56, 58.

67 H. Politaki, 'Αγροτισμός', *Αγροτική Ζωή* 6 (July 1927) 3.

68 *Αγροτική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια* 10 (May 1935) 243.

and the 'radical measures' (as the League of the Athens agronomists themselves depicted them) taken in the late 1920s by the Venizelos government for the sake of agriculture.⁶⁹

In addition to calling for a 'return to the land', these agrarianist intellectuals idealized the peasants as 'the most vital agents of the State's economic prosperity' and 'the liveliest contributors to the continuation and the preservation of the population of the nation'.⁷⁰ The director of *Agrotiki Zoi* in particular argued that 'the basis of the Nation's very existence is a prosperous agrarian class, which is the inexhaustible reservoir of the wealth-producing, the moral and the military resources of the nation'; for this reason she contended that agrarianism should become 'the agenda and the direction of those who nourish and are interested in national ideals'.⁷¹ Actually, in inter-war Europe conservative agrarianists, along with reactionary and fascist movements, wooed the peasants and set the trend for an almost mystical glorification of the agricultural labourer.⁷² Agrarianism, in its conservative form, harked back to a more stable social order of reciprocal bonds that existed before the rise of cities and machines, and called for a return to a traditional economic and moral order.⁷³ Unsurprisingly, as the historian of ideas Roger Griffin correctly notes, Nazism welded radical agrarianism's anti-urbanism and reagrarization policies into its discourse, exalting the peasantry as the nucleus of a new aristocracy of 'blood and earth'.⁷⁴

Nevertheless, similarities with the radical narrative of fascism and the Nazi ruralist extreme of *völkisch* thinking should not obscure or negate the individuality of agrarianism as a distinct stream of thought. Therefore, I am convinced that the novel peasantist nationalist narrative, originally moulded by agronomists, was an offshoot of right-wing agrarianist discourse and was definitely different in kind from fascist and Nazi discourse. Agronomists took an active part in the founding of the Agrarian Party of Greece, which included in its ranks both conservative and more leftist agrarianist politicians and intellectuals. For instance, the journalist Dimitris Pournaras and the teacher Kostas Gavrieliadis leaned toward a 'socialist' and 'communist' version of agrarianism respectively. Whereas the agronomists argued for close cooperation with the bourgeois national state in the modernization of agriculture, the leftist agrarians opted for the regeneration of the countryside 'on the basis of popular solutions'. After the break-up of the party in the summer of 1924, the agronomists, as a state-employed professional group, collectively followed the right-wing National Agrarian Party of Spyros Chasiotis and, from 1932 onwards, the Agrarian Democratic Party, led by Alexandros Mylonas.⁷⁵

69 Syndesmos ton en Athinais Epistimonon Geoponon, *Πώς θα επιτύχη η γεωργική πρόοδος του τόπου*, 1–3.

70 H. Politaki, 'To χωρικό σπίτι', *Αγροτική Ζωή* 17 (June 1928) 26.

71 H. Politaki, 'Αγροτισμός', *Αγροτική Ζωή* 6 (July 1927) 1–3.

72 Mitraný, *Marx against the Peasant*, 157–61.

73 McNaylor, 'Agrarianism', 504–6.

74 R. Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (London and New York 1996 [1991]) 98–100.

75 D. Pournaras, *Σοσιαλισμός, κομμουνισμός και αγροτισμός: Το κοινωνικόν ζήτημα εις την Ελλάδα* (Athens 1933) 22–7, 35; Panagiotopoulos, *Αγροτικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος*, 50–3, 58–9, 71–3; S. G. Ploumidis, *Έδαφος και*

Within this manifest narrative, agricultural land was identified with the national territory and the class of smallholders with the nation. In this context, the tilling of the land was imaginatively seen as the exercise of national sovereignty vis-à-vis the nation's external enemies. For instance, *Agrotiki Zoi*, *Agrotikos Tachydromos* and the Bulletin of the Ministry of Agriculture asserted that

Today we think that our national duties are limited to the safeguarding of the frontiers, the purchase of guns, etc., and yet we have not realized that the foundation of our frontiers lies somewhere else, deep down, deeper down [i.e. in the ground]. Our neighbours have realized this, and so, by means of their internal agro-farming organization [i.e. the Slavic *zadruga*] and their contact with the fields, they build their most unassailable national frontier. [...] Our neighbours, and especially Bulgaria, have paid a great deal of attention to this matter. [...] Our northern frontiers will be secured only by means of a fertile and productive organization. [...] By digging our land as much and as best we can, by enriching it with various and [genetically] improved animals, we build the best and most impregnable foundations of our National frontiers.⁷⁶

Love the Greek Land [...] Love it not just as a piece of earth that covers the relics of your ancestors, but like the Greek Flag that inspires us and raises our morale and under whose folds we are all accustomed to sacrifice ourselves.⁷⁷

The Greeks' craze for 'becoming humans' in the towns is a severe and chronic illness that afflicts our country. It is an illness that might threaten even the very existence of our Nation. A Nation without agricultural life, without deeply-rooted agricultural foundations, without big, densely-populated and happy villages, is unthinkable. Not just because, in order to feel your Homeland as something palpable and vivid, you have to be able to see it [...] its nature, its scenery, namely the countryside of the Homeland. But also because the material existence of the Nation cannot even be imagined without agriculture.⁷⁸

For this reason, peasantist nationalism should not be confused with economic nationalism, which made its first appearance in Greece at around the same time (in 1923 during the agrarian crisis), and was instituted immediately after the country's bankruptcy in 1932.⁷⁹ Peasantist nationalism was not focused on the economy per se but, more particularly, was primarily aimed at: a) attracting and persuading (rather

Continued

μνήμη στα Βαλκάνια: Ο «γεωργικός εθνικισμός» στην Ελλάδα και στη Βουλγαρία (1927–46) (Athens 2011) 55, 150–2.

76 G. Papavasili, 'Τα μεταπολεμικά εθνικά μας σύνορα', *Νέα Αγροτική Ζωή* 70 (12 July 1931) 7–9.

77 D. L. Zographos, 'Γεωργικά κηρύγματα: Ε'. Οι εκπαιδευτικοί παράγοντες και η γεωργία', *Γεωργικόν Δελτίον* (of the Ministry of Agriculture) 4 (Oct.–Dec. 1930) 42.

78 S. K., 'Το χωριό και η εθνική ανόρθωσις', *Αγροτικός Ταχυδρόμος* 262 (15 March 1934) 41.

79 Cf. E. D. Prontzas, *Οικονομικός εθνικισμός: Δοκίμιο στη νεοελληνική ιστορία* (Thessaloniki 1999) 121, 188, 192.

naively) the farmers to remain on the land; b) enhancing their endeavours towards achieving the country's nutritional self-sufficiency; and c) strengthening their loyalty towards the bourgeois state and the socio-political establishment (a nexus first established in the far-reaching 1917 land reform).

Radical agrarianism, transformed into peasantist nationalism, also influenced the way historians, sociologists, agronomists and other scholars structured the past: the political and military setbacks of the Greek nation were deterministically attributed to its alienation from its (imagined) agricultural tradition. Most decisive for the construction of this historiographical perception were the explanations proposed by Charles Diehl (1859–1944) for the decline of Byzantium. In a work first published in 1919, the renowned French historian regarded the decay of agriculture, the destitution of the countryside and the abandonment of the fields by the peasants, together with the commercial expansion of the Italian cities and the financial distress of the imperial government, as being among the main causes of the economic decline of the Eastern Roman Empire.⁸⁰ Diehl's historical comments on the role of agriculture were selectively used and expanded by Greek agrarianist intellectuals into a peasantist nationalist doctrine in order to substantiate their arguments against urbanism. In 1926, Konstantinos Karavidas, an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs responsible for rural settlement in northern Greece, framed the contemporary Greco-Bulgarian nationalist rivalry within the context of an 'agro-economic culture' and construed it in the light of the medieval (Byzantine) past. He considered the bourgeois culture of the Greeks as inferior to the agrarian culture of the Slavs, arguing that agriculture was a mightier weapon for national predominance than commerce or industry. In particular, he asserted that

during the time when the Empire of Byzantium was conquering the Slavic conscience and was gradually integrating the latter into its civilization – the greatest in medieval times – at that time the Slavic element was seizing material supremacy with the plough in the lands where it had spread and was absorbing linguistically the native populations that were living there.

Karavidas concluded that the northern provinces of Byzantium were lost to the Slavs because the Greek nation turned to commercial and mercantile professions that were practised on 'narrow strips of land' (i.e. in towns on the coastline), and thus the nation lost its 'roots' in the vast countryside. He offered the same explanation for the recent disastrous defeat of the Greek army in Asia Minor (1922): the 'over-urbanization' of the Greek nation and its 'fatal decision' to 'trade only' and to 'amass riches' and not 'to work, to plant roots in the earth and to acquire new plots from it' brought about its further 'coagulation' and its 'uprooting' from the Near East.⁸¹ In 1931, Karavidas

80 C. Diehl, *Byzantium: Greatness and Decline* (New Brunswick 1957) 90–3, 188–99.

81 K. D. Karavidas, 'Η μακεδονοσλαβική αγροτική κοινότης και η πατριαρχική γεωργική οικογένεια εις την περιφέρειαν Μοναστηρίου: Γενικόν μέρος', *Αρχαίον Οικονομικών και Κοινωνικών Ερευνών* 6/4 (Oct.–Dec. 1926) 227, 232, 241, 245–6, 256, 295, 303.

repeated that 'the stubborn attachment of the Slavs to their land was their best weapon, because in this way they spread and demographically prevailed in the countryside'. This agrarianist intellectual followed up his argument by exhorting his fellow-Greeks to 'strengthen the continental sources of Greece and its agricultural and land hearths' so that 'great masses of Greece's excess population remain on them'.⁸²

The social anxiety resulting from urbanism was obviously intensified by the quest for ethnic homogenization in Greece's ethnically diverse northern provinces. First in 1923 and most thoroughly in 1927, the historian Konstantinos Amantos (1870–1960) had argued that the 'issue of the development of agriculture' was of 'great importance for the mere existence and the future of Hellenism'; and he had warned that 'unless the agrarian population was reinforced, the constantly expanding Slavism would blow Hellenism into the sea'.⁸³ The eminent historian asserted that 'throughout the centuries of Greek history, the Greek loved to have recourse to the towns'. He noted that this 'age-old hereditary tendency', i.e. 'the abandonment of the countryside and the concentration of the Greeks in Athens and Piraeus', was continuing at that time to an alarmingly greater extent, especially after the Asia Minor Catastrophe. In 1927, Amantos explicitly drew the attention of the state authorities to 'the most crucial point of the Pindus range, its northern edge, where foreign-speaking, especially Slavic-speaking, populations are also residing; to populations that are targeted by alien propaganda'.⁸⁴ The state-run project of ethnic homogenization of these provinces was clearly linked (in Karavidas' and Amantos' discourse) to the preservation of the ethnically Greek rural population. This project and subsequently Greece's national security were undermined by the tendency of the Greeks to flee the countryside and the intransigent propensity of the members of Slavic ethnic minorities to remain on the land.

The ideological mutation of Diehl's historical interpretation into a peasantist nationalist dogma was by no means limited to Karavidas and Amantos. In 1931, the press baron Antonios Chamoudopoulos and the Senator for Thessaloniki Michael Mavrogordatos deplored the urbanist tendency of the farmers of modern Greece in similar terms: 'It is widely known that our Nation has not been a peasant nation [*γεωργικόν έθνος*] in the last few centuries of its life. Since Byzantine times it had started to abandon the fields. This was the main reason behind the decadence of our Medieval Empire'.⁸⁵ In 1934,

82 Karavidas, *Αγροτικά*, 17, 125, 140. For Karavidas' peasantist analytical framework for the Greco-Slavic nationalist rivalry, see also K. P. Kostis, 'Ο Καραβίδας και η "ανακάλυψη" των χωρικών στη μεσοπολεμική Ελλάδα', in M. Komninou and E. Papataxiarchis (eds), *Κοινότητα, κοινωνία και ιδεολογία: Ο Κωνσταντίνος Καραβίδας και η προβληματική των κοινωνικών επιστημών* (Athens 1990) 75.

83 K. I. Amantos, *Οι βόρειοι γείτονες της Ελλάδος* (Athens 1923) 328; E. Kontogiorgi, 'Ο Κωνσταντίνος Αμαντος και οι απόψεις του για τη σημασία και τον εκσυγχρονισμό της υπαίθρου', *Δελτίο του Κέντρου Ερεύνης της Ιστορίας του Νεωτέρου Ελληνισμού* 1 (1998) 155, 162–9.

84 K. Amantos, 'Οι γεωργικοί πληθυσμοί και το μέλλον του ελληνισμού', in P. Dekazos (ed.), *Η πύκνωσις των αγροτικών μας πληθυσμών και τα μέσα της επιτυχίας αυτής* (Athens 1927) 8–9.

85 M. I. Mavrogordatos and A. Ch. Chamoudopoulos, *Η Μακεδονία: Μελέτη δημογραφική και οικονομική* (Thessaloniki 1931) 45.

the sociologist Demosthenes Danielidis regretted the loss of the 'traditional agrarian craft' of the Greeks and their 'tendency to desert the land', and condemned the 'anti-agrarian mentality, a preponderant Byzantine legacy which passed into modern Greek ideals; found favourable ground in the spirituality of the modern Greek national character; blended in with the spirit of urbanism of modern times; and created a negative situation, generating many deplorable phenomena and fatal complications in our economic and social life'.⁸⁶ In 1935, the agronomist Vasileios Ganosis argued that Slavs and Turks, 'young peoples with greater vitality and more of an agrarian character than the Greeks, flooded the countryside of Byzantium, and repulsed the sparse Greek population to the towns'. This agronomist/publicist concluded that 'the existence of a solid and economically prosperous agrarian population was and always is a necessity of prime importance for our country and an uppermost duty of our governments'.⁸⁷

Peasantist nationalism as a hegemonic ideology

These peasantist nationalist perceptions were fully adopted by the Metaxas regime (1936–41), which – like any other related fascist or quasi-fascist regime – elevated 'mythical thought to power' (as the historian Emilio Gentile expressed it), i.e. raised neo-romanticism to the status of a dominant ideology, rendering it the highest form of political expression of the masses and the ethical basis for their mobilization.⁸⁸ In this case, urbanism was negatively tainted and (semi-officially) considered equivalent to high treason. In 1937, Babis Alivizatos, the secretary-general of the Ministry of Agriculture and vice-director of the Agricultural Bank of Greece, declared that 'the tilling of the land is a high social function, which is entrusted to the hands of the farmer, yet it does not concern him alone, but the entirety of Society'.⁸⁹ This neo-romantic view was actually in line with official policies. A stated position of the dictatorial regime (established on 4 August 1936) was that 'the attachment of the tiller to the native and nurturing motherland is the basis of patriotism, the foundation of the citizen's loyalty to the Homeland'.⁹⁰ The reversal of urbanization was clearly on the long-term agenda of the regime (although it never materialized), and the regime's propagandists called upon the migrant farmer to 'make his way back to his home village, like the prodigal son of the Scriptures'. To this end, the arable land and the farmer's trade were idealized by the regime's organic intellectuals into moral values interconnected to the nation and indispensable for 'the preservation of the national traditions', as well as for 'the maintenance and the augmentation of

86 D. Danielidis, *Η Νεολληνική κοινωνία και οικονομία*, I (Προϋποθέσεις) (Athens 1934) 64–6, 254–5.

87 V. Ganossis, *Δοκίμια και μελέται* (Athens 1936) 45–7.

88 Cf. E. Gentile, *Fascismo: Storia e interpretazione* (Rome 2002) 147–9.

89 B. Alivizatos, *Η Νέα Γεωργική Πολιτική* (Athens 1937) 19.

90 Editorial, 'The country's new agrarian law, foundation of our future agricultural progress', *Εργασία* 489 (14 May 1939) 464.

the nation's dynamism'.⁹¹ In June 1939, the official organ of the regime's youth organization proclaimed that in order to survive 'a people must be tightly knit with its primordial civilization, that is the farming of the ancestral soil'.⁹²

More importantly, the agenda of the peasantist nationalist discourse of Greece's quasi-fascist dictatorship exceeded mere flattery of the peasants and the intensification of farming. A persistent government policy of Metaxas' New State was the consolidation of the conservative stratum of smallholders, which had been created earlier by the Venizelist land reform of 1917,⁹³ and its metamorphosis into a 'sincere supporter and watchful guard of the national State',⁹⁴ meaning the semi-fascist regime and the monarchy. In the regime's dominant narrative, the class of farmers was manifestly identified with the nation. Therefore, the envisaged gradual disintegration of this class was perceived as a 'terrible attrition of the National forces',⁹⁵ because the peasants ('the workers of the Greek land') were publicly extolled as 'a pillar of Greece's bourgeois edifice'.⁹⁶ Metaxas' government willingly embraced the pre-existing agrarianist doctrine that 'the farmers are the soul of the nation'⁹⁷ and placed it on a pedestal. The Fourth of August regime idealized agriculture as a 'national ideal' and professed the 'economic and social restructuring of Greece on the basis of a broader agrarianization'.⁹⁸ The 'creation of an overwhelmingly agrarian Greece' was solemnly sanctified as 'the greatest contemporary political ideal'.⁹⁹

In January 1937, peasantist nationalism eventually assumed institutional dimensions and literally became the hegemonic ideology of the Greek state. The new state ideology was formalized by the Minister of Agriculture and academician Georgios Kyriakos, who was an agronomist by profession. In his address to the annual plenary meeting of the Academy of Athens, Kyriakos read a paper prepared by a fellow agronomist, Konstantinos Nevros (a regular columnist of *Agrotikos Tachydromos*). In it, Kyriakos stated that 'the nation has its roots in the fields' and advised that

91 G. Chr. Lilis, 'Ιστορίες του χωριού. Ο ξενιτεμένος', *Αγροτικός Ταχυδρόμος* 318 (15 Dec. 1938) 232–4; cf. *Εστία* 17,111 (27 May 1938) 1; D. Vernardakis, 'Η ηθική αξία του γεωργικού βίου', *Η Νεολαία* (published by the Εθνική Οργάνωση Νεολαίας) 14 (6 Jan. 1940) 420.

92 *Η Νεολαία* 37 (24 June 1939) 1204.

93 S. G. Ploumidis, 'Το καθεστώς Μεταξά, 1936–1940', in E. Hatzivassiliou (ed.), *Η δικτατορία του Ιωάννη Μεταξά 1936–1941* (Athens 2010) 80–1. Cf. G. Th. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922–1936* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1983) 161.

94 A. Theodosopoulos, 'Ποία η θέση του αγρότου εις το Νέον Κράτος', *Το Νέον Κράτος* 1 (September 1937) 55; Z. I. Kagalidou, *Εκπαίδευση και πολιτική: Η περίπτωση του καθεστώτος της 4ης Αυγούστου* (Thessaloniki 1999) 37.

95 [A. Th. Mouratoglous], 'Γύρω από μίαν συζήτησιν', *Αγροτικός Ταχυδρόμος* 312 (15 June 1938) 102.

96 *Η Νεολαία* 41 (92) (13 July 1940) 1300.

97 Cf. K. N. Philippidis, *Ο Αγροτισμός ως λύσις του οικονομικού προβλήματος* (Athens 1932) 78.

98 Υφυπουργείον Τυπου και Τουρισμού, *Τέσσερα χρόνια διακυβερνήσεως Ι. Μεταξά 4 Αυγούστου 1936–4 Αυγούστου 1940*, I (Γεωργική και κοινωνική μεταρρύθμισις) (Athens 1940) 70, 112.

99 *Ibid.*, 70.

Especially for the sake of the new generation of Greeks, which has been deprived of its widespread agricultural bases in the East because of the historical developments of the past decade, it is most imperative now, more than ever before in the past, to root our nation in the remaining national territories and to intensify, to the greatest possible extent, the use of our agricultural resources, with the aim not only of enhancing the livelihood of the people and to achieve economic autarky, but also, and more importantly, since we are surrounded by peoples who have a long agricultural tradition and a developed agrarian conscience, and who are closely attached to their land, we should not consider our sovereignty over our national territories to be secure unless we reinforce our agricultural bases.¹⁰⁰

Within this peasantist nationalist narrative, the nation was formally identified with the farmers; the national territory was considered identical to the agricultural land; and the cultivation of the land was clearly equated with the exercise of national sovereignty.

To this end, the so-called 'Third Greek Civilization' (the regime's main ideological tenet) was meant to have an agrarian basis and be inspired by rustic life; therefore, the regime officially aimed at the creation of a newfangled 'Agrarian Civilization'.¹⁰¹ After World War II, Theologos Nikoloudis, the Deputy Minister of Press and Tourism (the official in charge of the propaganda machine), clarified that the 'national and social idealism' of the Third Greek Civilization was centred on 'the cultivation of the land'.¹⁰² In his speeches, Metaxas presented himself as 'a man of the land' who had the 'soul of a farmer'.¹⁰³ Addressing rallies of agrarian organizations in 1937–38, he imagined the Greek peasantist nation as follows:

Moral civilization in our country is based on the farmers [...] If you [i.e. the farmers] have, as you do actually have, the real merits of the Greek, then the Nation is civilized. [...] I imagine Greek society or rather the Greek Nation, because for us society and Nation are identical, as a pyramid [...] The agrarian class, namely the peasant people, is the lower stratum of the pyramid, from which the rest of the pyramid derives. [...] The route of Greek society starts from the lower strata and climbs up

100 K. I. Nevros, 'Η σκαλιστική σιτοκαλλιέργεια εν Ελλάδι κατά το έτος 1935–1936', *Πρακτικά της Ακαδημίας Αθηνών* 12 (1937) 12; E. Karouzou, 'Ο εθνικισμός των αγρών: Αγρότες, αγροτικά προϊόντα και εθνικισμός στο Μεσοπόλεμο', in D. Panagiotopoulos and D. P. Sotiropoulos (eds), *Η ελληνική αγροτική κοινωνία και οικονομία κατά τη βενιζελική περίοδο* (Athens 2007) 211–14, 220–1. For Kyriakos' suggestions on wheat self-sufficiency, see K. V. Krimbas, 'Η συζήτηση για τη γεωργική πολιτική στην Ακαδημία Αθηνών το 1933 και το πρόβλημα της σιτάρκειας', in Panagiotopoulos and Sotiropoulos (eds), *op. cit.*, 232–6. For a further discussion on the peasantist nationalist discourse in Metaxas' Greece, see Ploumidis, *Εδαφος και μνήμη*, 99–112.

101 *Η Νεολαία* 18 (11 February 1939) 589; 52 (7 October 1939) 6; *Αγροτικό Μέλλον* 36 (29 July 1939) 1; 69 (16 March 1940) 1; 77 (11 May 1940) 2; I. Metaxas, *Λόγοι και Σκέψεις 1936–1941*, I (Athens 1969) 305.

102 T. Nikoloudis, *Η ελληνική κρίσις* 2nd edn (Cairo 1945) 140.

103 M. Petrakis, *The Metaxas Myth: Dictatorship and Propaganda in Greece* (London and New York 2006) 54.

to the uppermost level. It is like a brook that springs from a source, from inside the earth, and flows and irrigates.¹⁰⁴

Metaxas placed himself at the top of the peasantist national pyramid on 1 July 1937, the day he was solemnly proclaimed the 'First Farmer' (*Πρώτος Αγρότης*) by the representatives of the country's Chambers of Agriculture.¹⁰⁵ This populist position was repeatedly echoed in the regime's propaganda in which the farmers were similarly characterized as 'the healthiest mass of the Nation', 'the foundation of National life', 'the foundation of the National Body Politic', 'the source of every action of the Nation', etc.¹⁰⁶

The Greek case can certainly be placed within a broader ideological picture. Metaxas was evidently inspired by Hitler's *Reichsbauernführer*, i.e. 'National Peasant Leader', and a radical agrarianist ideologue Walther Darré, whose theories about farmers being the 'source of life' (*Lebensquellen*) for the German nation, became the cornerstone of the Nazi *Blut und Boden* precept.¹⁰⁷ Last but not least, radical agrarianist ideas loaded with nationalist overtones, either standing independently or, more frequently, fused into a fascist ideological context, were a common frame of reference in the Balkans. In Romania in particular, the peasantist nation had overt racist and anti-Semitic overtones. Irina Livezeanu has described how the definition of the Romanian nation as fundamentally rural was translated practically into the mobilization of the peasant strata in an endeavour to reduce the political and cultural influence of an 'alien' urban society and culture. The mass entry of the Romanian peasants into political life – mainly through the expansion of education – and their concentration in the towns facilitated the emergence of a new generation of Romanian nationalists, who generally deplored the 'disparate' presence of non-Romanians (ethnic Magyars, Saxons, and especially Jews) in the bourgeois elites of the new lands of Transylvania and Bukovina.¹⁰⁸ In a pertinent symbolic manner, the Leader (*Căpitanul*) of the Legion of the Archangel Michael, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, appeared in the legionary rallies wearing peasant attire.¹⁰⁹

Conclusion

In the case of Greece, the gradual construction of the peasantist nationalist discourse began in 1927, the year in which state intervention in the rural economy began, and in

104 Metaxas, *Λόγοι και Σκέψεις*, I, 427–8.

105 Petrakis, *The Metaxas Myth*, 55.

106 Alivizatos, *Κράτος και γεωργική πολιτική*, 528; *Αγροτικό Μέλλον* 1 (26 Nov. 1938) 3; 8 (14 Jan. 1939) 6; 65 (17 Feb. 1940) 1; 66 (24 Feb. 1940) 7.

107 Cf. D. Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda* (London and New York 1995) 66–7; M. Neocleous, *Fascism* (Buckingham 1997) 76–7.

108 I. Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918–1930* (Ithaca, NY 1995) 299, 302–3, 311.

109 S. G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914–1945* (Madison, WI 1995) 277, 285.

which *Agrotiki Zoi*, the first and foremost radical agrarianist periodical, was first published, and was firmly completed a decade later, during the Metaxas period. Peasantist nationalism can be interpreted as a radical form of what Anthony Smith calls 'ethnic nationalism', i.e. a populist and folkish conception of the nation, in which the route to nationhood proceeded through popular mobilization.¹¹⁰ It drew mainly on radical agrarianism, which came about as a response to acute social problems, namely the depression in agriculture during the 1920s and the migratory drift from the countryside (the so-called *Landflucht*), as well as on neo-romanticism. This discourse developed because of the constant fear that this migratory drift would possibly assume the dimensions of a rural exodus, and that the overcrowded poor urban areas would become a hotbed of social revolution. The peasantist nationalist ideology was largely conceived of by an emerging social group of professional agronomists, who were called in by the state to solve the crisis in the rural economy and to achieve Greece's self-sufficiency in grain and other nutritional products. Radical agrarianism and peasantist nationalism were used by the agronomists as a lever for their own upward social mobility and their entry into the category of the organic intellectuals of bourgeois society. Analogous peasantist nationalist ideas also appeared in the neighbouring Balkan societies, particularly in Romania. In Greece, the downfall of the Metaxas regime in April 1941 brought with it the demise of this particular nationalist discourse.

110 A. D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford and New York 1987 [1986]) 137–8.

The Pontic Greek spoken by Muslims in the villages of Beşköy in the province of present-day Trabzon

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This article consists of two parts. The first part provides general information on the language and its speakers: I describe the language, land, and livelihood of the Greek-speaking people of Beşköy in Trabzon province. In this respect it is indispensable to mention migration, which is one of the most serious threats the Greek-speaking community and their language faces today; statistical data show that Beşköy lost half of its population over the past fifty years. Despite these adverse conditions, the language has proved to be resilient enough to remain a preferred means of communication when Greek-speakers come together. In the last subsection, on language and identity, I present testimonies by native people which illustrate that positive attitudes towards both the Greek language and Turkish citizenship or Islamic identity are easily compatible.

The second part comprises a linguistic discussion of the language and aims at giving an overview of its main features. It describes its phonological system, and points out some of its most interesting morphological and syntactical characteristics. Special emphasis is laid on the differences from the Sarachos variety that has been studied by Peter Mackridge.¹

The external setting for the language

General information on language and speakers

Muslim Pontic, is a Greek dialect spoken by the inhabitants of various villages east and west of the provincial capital in the Trabzon prefecture (north-east Turkey). As a result of the population exchange stipulated in the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, Pontic-speaking Muslims were allowed to stay, while Christian Pontians had to leave their home and emigrate to Greece. According to my recent research and the earlier findings of Andrews and Mackridge today Pontic-speakers live in four parts of Trabzon:²

1 I am very grateful to Peter Mackridge, who provided me with many useful hints and took great pains to read and re-read the draft of this article. Also, I would like to express my gratitude to the DFG (German Research Foundation) for their support.

2 P. A. Andrews, *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey* (Wiesbaden 1989) 204 and P. Mackridge, 'Greek-Speaking Moslems of north-east Turkey: Prolegomena to a study of the Ophitic sub-dialect of Pontic', *BMGS* 11 (1987) 115–37, at 115 (hereafter 'Prolegomena').

1. Six villages of the Tonya district (69 km WSW of Trabzon city).
2. Beşköy, a municipal entity of 6 villages in the Goneshera (Köprübaşı) districts (around 39 km east of Trabzon city). Further down I will explain why these villages, too, belong to the next group.
3. The Ophis (Of) district (about 52 km east of Trabzon city): seventeen villages in the Gatochor (Çaykara) district, eleven in the Gondu (Dernekpazarı) district, and six in the Sarachos (Uzungöl) district.
4. The Maçka district (10 km west of the town of Maçka, 28 km SW of Trabzon city): in nine villages of the Galyana valley. The Greek-speakers there had to leave Beşköy after a devastating flood in 1929 and were assigned houses with land in the Galyana valley. Interestingly these houses belonged to Christian Pontians who left the region during the population exchange.

The highest concentration of Muslim Pontic-speakers is located in the Ophis region. A census in 1965 which accounted for speakers of minority languages (the last of its kind) states that 4,535 persons in the whole province of Trabzon mentioned *Rumca* (Muslim Pontic) as their mother tongue, thereby acknowledging its status as different language – a very unusual thing to do in a country where *Rumca* is strongly and negatively associated to Greece and Christianity. The numbers may be incorrect as many Pontians (who call themselves Turks) may have regarded both Turkish and Muslim Pontic as their mother tongue, thus overriding their primary language in favour of the secondary one.³

For this reason this figure by no means comes close to the total number of Muslim Pontic-speakers at that time. The 1965 census shows that 5,740 people lived in the Muslim Pontic-speaking villages of Beşköy alone. If we consider that almost all inhabitants of the Beşköy villages speak Muslim Pontic the actual number for the Of and Tonya districts may be considerably larger. In this respect the heavy emigration to places within Turkey (Istanbul, Sakarya, Zonguldak, Bursa and Adapazarı for example)⁴ must also be taken into account. Emigration was not limited to the boundaries of Turkey; it saw a enormous spike when European countries such as Germany invited workers from Turkey in the early sixties.

Prior research and objectives of this article

When Peter Mackridge visited Trabzon in the 1980s he was the first scholar to do field-work in Sarachos (Uzungöl) since Parcharidis in 1876.⁵ Mackridge describes his work as ‘scratching the surface’ of the Greek dialects that are spoken there.⁶ Nevertheless, his

3 Mackridge, ‘Prolegomena’, 117.

4 For Sakarya see Andrews, *Ethnic Groups in the Republic of Turkey*, 204.

5 See Mackridge, ‘Prolegomena’ 119 and 136. See also P. Mackridge, ‘The Greek spoken in the region of Of (Pontus)’, in *Διαλεκτικοί θύλακοί της ελληνικής γλώσσας/Dialect Enclaves of the Greek Language* (Athens 1999) 101–5, at 101, n. 1 for further bibliography (hereafter ‘Of’).

6 P. Mackridge, ‘Bernt Brendemoen, The Turkish dialects of Trabzon. Their phonology and historical development’, *BMGS* 29 (2005) 95–6.

contributions to the study of the Ophitic subdialect contain so many startling insights into the arcane universe of these dialects that they are still the basis for every scholar who wants to study the Muslim Pontic dialects spoken in present-day Trabzon. In fact, there are only a few scholarly publications on the variants of Muslim Pontic spoken there.⁷

This article has four objectives: (1) The description of the geography and agriculture of Beşkøy; (2) the discussion of demographic and sociolinguistic conditions and the question of language and identity; (3) the description of the difficulties of doing fieldwork in the area; and lastly (4) a linguistic discussion of the dialect of Beşkøy with special consideration of the data that Mackridge provided for Sarachos.

Terminology

One of the questions that have to be settled at the outset is what name should be used for the dialect, or rather for the variants of Pontic that are spoken in Pontus today. In order to avoid misunderstandings the term *Pontiaka*, which is widely used in Greece to denote the Pontic language, is avoided for the dialect under study. *Pontiaka* is a scholarly coinage that became common usage when the language became extensively studied by scholars such as Papadopoulos and Oikonomidis.⁸ Both worked on the Chaldia dialect (dialect of Argypoupolis, now called Gümüşhane) which happened to be their native dialect. The hitherto most complete grammar of this same variety was written by Georges Drettas.⁹ As a consequence, the works on *Pontiaka* in Greece refer chiefly to the Chaldia variety rather than the whole set of existing subdialects.

Other terms used for these dialects are *Rumca*, *Rumcika* and *Romeyka*. *Rumca* is used to denote their language by many speakers in Trabzon province when speaking Turkish. This is potentially confusing, because *Rumca* is also used in Turkey to refer

7 Mackridge 'Prolegomena', 118 and 'Of' 101, n. 1 lists the few works that have been published on Ophitic. Pietro Bortone, a former student of Peter Mackridge with fieldwork experience in Pontus, recently published a book chapter on the status of Muslim Pontic Greek as a language without models, history and standard (P. Bortone, 'Greek with no models, history, or standard: Muslim Pontic Greek', in A. Georgakopoulou and M. Silk (eds), *Standard Languages and Language Standards: Greek, Past and Present* (London 2009) 67–89). R. M. Dawkins' research in Of and Sürmene in 1914 was confined to the Christian villages and resulted in his article 'Folk tales from Sourmena and the valley of Ophis', *Αρχαίον Πόντου* 3 (1931) 79–122. He also took notes on the dialects of Sürmene and Of in notebooks that are now stored in the Special Collections of the Taylor Institution Slavonic and Modern Greek Library of the University of Oxford (R. M. Dawkins, 'Σούρμενα και τα Σουρμενίτικα 11.vii–16.vii 1914'. The comparison of the data in the notebook on Sürmene with Muslim Pontic shows that the dialect described is substantially different from the dialect under study here. Apart from these researchers Ioanna Sitaridou of Cambridge University has undertaken research in the region with an emphasis on the infinitive, topicalization and double object constructions. Sitaridou hosted the first symposium on Muslim Pontic in Cambridge in March 2010.

8 A. A. Papadopoulos, *Ιστορικόν λεξικόν της ποντικής διαλέκτου* (Athens 1958–61), A. A. Papadopoulos, *Ιστορική γραμματική της ποντικής διαλέκτου* (Athens 1955) and D. I. Oikonomidis, *Γραμματική της ελληνικής διαλέκτου του Πόντου* (Athens 1958).

9 G. Drettas, *Aspects pontiques* (Paris 1998).

to all Greek dialects spoken in Turkey. It is, for example, used for the Greek spoken in Istanbul, or the Greek spoken by the Muslims who resettled from the island of Crete to Turkey in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Cypriot Greek, too, shares the same name. For the Greek language of Greece, however, Turks normally use *Yunanca*, whereas the ancient Greek language is called *Eski Yunanca* or *Grekçe*. *Romeyka* is a name that speakers call their own language when they are speaking it. In Ottoman times *ρωμαίικα* was the normal term used in colloquial Greek to refer to spoken Modern Greek throughout the Greek-speaking world until it was gradually superseded by *ελληνικά* from the early nineteenth century onwards. *Rumcika* is made up of the Turkish morpheme *-ca* together with the Greek suffix *-ika*. *Rumca* and *Rumcika* are both terms that are widely used by Sürmene speakers, whereas *Romeyka*, and less so *Rumcika*, is what most of the speakers in Çaykara and Dernekpazarı call their language.

For the sake of disambiguation and continuity the term ‘Muslim Pontic’ will be used in this article (henceforth abbreviated MP). It was first introduced by Mackridge,¹⁰ who also speaks of the ‘Greek-Speaking Moslems of north-east Turkey’.¹¹

The area and its geography

The name Beşköy, which means ‘five villages’ in Turkish, did not exist until it became a municipal entity in 1994. The names of the villages (the new names are in brackets) are: Galisd (Konuklu), Ochshocho (Dağardı), Mazira (Yılmazlar), Archandshelo (Küçük Doğanlı), Asbalo and Fodshani (Büyük Doğanlı). Following the administrative separation of Bedridan (Emirgan) from the larger village of Ochshocho (Dağardı) Beşköy is now composed at present of six villages.

The villages of Beşköy lie in the upper valley of the Manachos river, which flows north into the Black Sea at Sürmene city. The distance from the farthest village of Beşköy to the next district centre Goneshera (Köprübaşı) is 11 km while the distance to Sürmene is 28 km. The highest villages are situated at a height of around 1,100 m and the mountain pastures that transhumant villagers use in the summer lie between an altitude of 2,200 and 2,400 m.

As can be seen from these figures, the most distinctive feature of the geography of Beşköy, as for the Eastern Black Sea region east of Amisos (Samsun) in general, is the mountain range of the Pontic Alps, which reaches heights of over 4,000 metres at some points. The highest mountain in the area south of Beşköy, Madur Dağı, measures 2,742 m. This huge mountain range has always been like a dam that blocked the littoral from influences out of Central Anatolia, and there are only a few passes that grant access to the Black Sea coast. However, only some of these passes are accessible during the winter months.

The climate of Beşköy is humid, with high levels of rainfall during all seasons of the year except the summer. Over the whole year one hundred and fifty days are rainy, which

10 See Bortone, ‘Greek with no models’, 67.

11 Mackridge, ‘Prolegomena’, 115.

accounts for a lush green vegetation with forests that look like jungles, except in winter when some species of trees lose their foliage. To somebody who travels from the relatively flat relief of Bayburt to Trabzon via the mountain pastures (T *yayla*, MP *barcharæ*) the abrupt descent into these evergreen abysses hung with clouds is still very spectacular – especially after days of relaxed driving in Central Anatolia. Anyone who has experienced this will understand how the first nomadic Turkmen and Turkish tribes that were used to a flat topography must have felt when they first approached the Pontic mountains.

Apart from the high ridge of the Pontic mountains that runs parallel to the coastline the geography of Trabzon is furthermore characterized by rivers running from south to north that cut precipitous valleys of several hundred meters depth into the strip of land between the sea and the mountain range. Typically, at every river mouth sits the administrative centre of the district. For the Solaklı river (Ophis) this centre is Of (52 km east of Trabzon) and for the Manachos river the administrative centre is Sürmene (36 km east of Trabzon, 16 km west of Of). In the opposite direction the rivers lead to the mountain pastures, where the village people bring their livestock during the summer months. These valleys are normally isolated from each other (for one notable exception that is interesting for the MP dialect see further down) and form village systems with specific routes that lead to the district towns in one direction and to the mountain pastures in the other. The villages usually maintain contact with the outside world only as far as the district centre on the river or the larger administrative centre on the sea. In the Sürmene district this centre is either the city of Sürmene itself or, for the villages that lie further south or higher in the mountains, Goneshera (Köprübaşı). At present, with distances more easily covered by cars and minibuses, people from the upper villages travel as far as Sürmene to attend the weekly market on Tuesday. But some decades ago the nearest district centre was the first choice when village people wanted contact with the world outside their outlying villages, which are located in high altitudes. Furthermore, the western and eastern mountainside of a valley each usually use separate routes that lead to the mountain pastures. These routes can meet at a point if the mountain pastures of the villages of both mountainsides lie close enough to each other.

Villagers hardly ever go from one valley to the next by crossing the mountains that separate them, because the undergrowth and the thickness of the steep forests prevent them from doing so. Instead they descend to the main road that runs along the riverbed until they arrive at the sea. From there they have to proceed to the river mouth of the next valley in order to make their way up to the interior of the other valley. Such would be the route of somebody who wants to pass from the Manachos village system to the Solaklı river system today. It must be noted here that before the construction of bridges and roads along the coastline from the 1960s onwards such a trip used to be a very arduous and extraordinary undertaking.

Agriculture and sustenance

Until the late 1950s and early 1960s, when large-scale emigration began to deplete the area of its workforce, most of Beşköy's people subsisted on livestock and crops, although

the steep mountainsides are unfavourable to extensive farming and herding. No machines were used for the cultivation of the crops.

Before the mass emigration only a small number of men derived their income from various trades, commerce and 'imaming'.¹² The most important element for the subsistence of the villagers and an absolute measure of every family's wealth is livestock, mainly cattle (MP *za*) and sheep (MP *broyada* or *brovada*) but also goats (MP *ejiḏa*) and buffalos (MP *dfamefa*). Dairy products like milk (MP *ylidfi*), yoghurt (MP *ȳala*), curd-cheese (MP *mindsi*), cheese (one type is MP *ȳolod*) are highly valued sustenance items. For this reason every family strove to have at least one cow, which they kept in a stall in the basement of every house. The body heat of the cows provided warmth for the inhabited ground floor above the stall. Cows were fed in their stalls with grass cut with sickles (or with stored hay from the mountain pastures) and with a cooked mixture of kale, bran, and food waste which is called *ȳal* in MP and Turkish. In the months from May to September cattle were driven into the mountain pastures. They did not take them into the highest pastures right away but to intermediate grazing lands (called *gom* or *mezire* in both MP and the Turkish dialect of the region). These lie at an altitude of about 1,200–1,500 m for the Beşköy villages. There they let the animals graze for some weeks until weather conditions became good enough to move further up to the high pastures (1,750–2,200 m altitude). The opposite would happen in September when they descend from the high pastures. They would not go down right away to their villages but stay in the *gom* for a while. Sometimes they had even two of these intermediate grazing lands. In every one of these *gom* and also in the *barxar* every larger family owned a more or less well built timber house with a base made from cut stone. Since the late 1960s these houses and also the houses of the villages are more and more replaced by concrete buildings or left to fall apart as a result of abandonment and the harsh weather conditions in these heights.

The two main cash crops of Beşköy are tea (T *çay*, MP *dshaj*) and hazelnuts (MP *lefdogaræ*). Tea was introduced to the region in the early years of the Turkish Republic after the loss of the coffee-producing provinces of the Ottoman empire. Hazelnut has been grown for thousands of years in the Eastern Black Sea region and exported.¹³

Maize (MP *dsubað*) is a very important subsistence crop of everyday use. It replaced millet cultivation during the early 17th century¹⁴ and was used for a variety of purposes such as maize bread, the very famous polenta-like MP *xavids* or T *kuymak* (in Rize and Artvin T *muhlama*; from Ordu to Trabzon T *yağlaş*, the latter a modified form of Standard Turkish *yağlaç*). MP *xavids* is prepared with ground maize, butter and a salty cheese made of yoghurt curd.

12 On 'imaming' see M. E. Meeker, *Nation of Empire* (Washington 2002) 58–9 and 66–7. Apart from these occupations, men from this area have been famous for their capabilities as soldiers since Ottoman times.

13 A. A. Bryer, *Greeks and Türkmens: The Pontic Exception* (Dumbarton Oaks 1975) 122.

14 J. Humlum, *Zur Geographie des Maisbaus* (Copenhagen 1942) 90.

Beans (MP *badidsa*), potatoes (MP *jermasia* < T *yer elması* calqued on F *pomme de terre*), kale (MP *mavrolaxana*) too figure among the most important vegetable varieties cultivated in Beşkøy. Among the fruits that are grown in Beşkøy are pears (MP *abiða*), apples (MP *mila*), a variety of plums (MP *godfimbela*) and figs (MP *sigá*) and very recently also kiwi and banana but also the very Pontian *Prunus laurocerasus* or Pontic cherry (MP *ðrafna*).

Beekeeping, too, is one of the ancient agricultural traditions of the region. Many families nowadays keep bees and sell their exquisite chestnut and flower honeys within the region and export them on individual distribution routes to Istanbul and other provinces of Turkey.

Migration

When taking a walk in Beşkøy today the first thing that jumps to the eye are the many old people who live there and the absence of younger people, especially those between eighteen and thirty years old. One of the first topics of conversation with the villagers is the massive emigration that the villages of Beşkøy have been subject to since the 1950s, mostly for economic reasons. Here are the official figures for the demographic evolution of Beşkøy over the last forty-six years:¹⁵

1965	5,740
1970	5,611
1980	5,325
1990	5,514
2000	4,223
2007	2,099
2008	2,178
2009	2,020
2010	2,418

Looking at the numbers given here we see that the population has diminished steadily over the last decades.

The numbers show that the population decreased gradually from 1965 until 1990. If the data are accurate the population decreased by 58% over the whole period, but especially sharply over the seventeen years from 1990 until 2007 (61%). After 2007 the population settled in the range 2,020–2,418. However, the latest report on registered inhabitants in 2010 gives a total population of 2,418 people, which marks an exceptional 20% rise as compared to the population of 2,020 counted in 2009.

I am not sure, however, whether the huge difference between the censuses of 2000 and 2007 accounts for real emigration. Turkish authorities changed their methods and criteria for counting a person as resident in a given area. For example, starting from

15 All data collected from the website of the Turkish Statistics Institute. http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?tb_id=39&cust_id=11: Accessed on 3 June 2011.

2007, the data exclude students, detainees, soldiers, and retired persons in retirement homes who have a residential address that is different from their home address in Beşköy. By contrast, these people were included in the data of 2000 and before. Still, and even if we take this into account, we are faced with a major decrease of population between 1990 and 2000 which probably continued during the following years. The main reason for the decrease between the years 1990 and 2000 is the flood of August 1998, which killed forty-seven people and laid waste a considerable part of the lower villages.

Unfortunately there are no census data available from 1950 to 1965 – a period that is of particular interest because at that time many people migrated to other provinces of Turkey and to European countries. A look at the population of some cities in Germany is indicative of large-scale labour emigration from the Of area. I know personally many families from Sarachos (Uzungöl), all MP-speakers, who form a big MP-speaking community in the city of Bergneustadt (North-Rhine Westfalia, 70 km east of Cologne). The first generation of these families in Germany came in the 1960s. This fact is only partly reflected in the census data between 1965 and 1970.

Migration is not a plight that began to beset the area in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Particularly after their resettlement in the upper valley in the sixteenth century, geographic isolation led many men to work outside their area or even abroad as regional and international merchants, imams or *cinci hocaları* (i.e. people who claim religious authority and are remunerated for their services such as writing charms against illnesses), peddlers, soldiers, sailors and workers. During that time they left the women to carry out the farming work and the transhumance to the mountain pastures.

Language and identity

Trabzon is well known for its staunch nationalists.¹⁶ Beşköy is no exception to this rule. Because of the danger of being perceived as Greeks (*Rum*) clinging to their language and culture, or even worse as Pontians who seek ‘their lost kingdom of Pontus’ (which is an obscure accusation voiced by Turkish nationalists), it comes as no surprise that MP-speaking people are particularly sensitive to questions of identity. It has to be clarified at this point that the English term ‘Greek’ is not identical to the Turkish *Rum*, which means Greek-speaking people of Turkey. Nobody in Beşköy would identify themselves as *Yunan*, which denotes everything Greek coming from Greece (T *Yunanistan*). However, as *Rum* is perceived in Turkey as linked in some way to Greece or the Orthodox Church, the Greek-speaking Muslims cannot easily present their language as their own, as other minorities in the Black Sea region such as the Laz do.¹⁷

16 This should not make us forget that Trabzon is also famous for its left-wing activists who played an important role in the clashes with nationalist groups in the late 70s. For example, Sinan Kukul, a native of Trabzon, was one of the founders of the revolutionist communist group Devrimci Sol.

17 It is for this reason that the study of the Laz language has been feasible in recent decades. A dictionary written by H. Uzunhasanoğlu and I. Avcı-Bucaklışı, *Lazuri Nenapuna/Lazca Sözlük* (Istanbul 1999) and a grammar by K. Goichi and I. Avcı-Bucaklışı, *Lazca Gramer/Laz Grammar* (Istanbul 2003) have been

In addition to the reasons stated above, many of the MP-speakers of Beşköy strive to be the best Turks and the most pious Muslims. I had no encounter with MP-speakers without the issue of identity being brought up in connection with their language. After a while the MP-speakers themselves would begin to say something on this very sensitive topic. Precisely because of the omnipresence and importance of this issue I cannot leave it uncommented in this introduction. Nevertheless, I did not question people systematically with the use of prepared questionnaires about their identity, their attitude vis-à-vis the language, i.e. if they like speaking it, if they want to pass it on to their children consciously, if they encountered difficulties because they speak MP, if they consider themselves of Turkish or Greek descent, if they can be Turks and Greeks at the same time, and how they regard Greece and the Pontians who live there. Appropriate answers to these very important sociolinguistic questions can only be found through extensive fieldwork that is endorsed by the Turkish authorities and a dedicated analysis of the data in a sizeable article or even a monograph. Nevertheless, I would like to dwell on some general tendencies that I have observed on the basis of the testimonies of my informants on their attitudes to language and identity. Of course I do not claim that these views are representative of MP-speakers in general, but they reflect the overwhelming impression I had during fieldwork in the region. Therefore I deem it necessary and valuable to give a voice to their opinions here.

Many of the MP-speakers I met deny the Greekness of their language, although they know at least that many words in Standard Modern Greek (SMG) are identical to the ones in MP. As a linguist I was often asked to join them in their view in favour of the distinctness of their language. Without telling a lie I tried to reconcile the obvious truth that MP is a Greek dialect with the equally true assertion that MP and SMG are two different languages in the way that Italian and Spanish are distinct languages, to the extent that some characteristics are very similar and others completely different. In most cases they were satisfied with this answer. In contrast to those who do not see any Greekness in their identity, many of my informants take a totally different stance. Surprisingly they frankly acknowledge a Greek (*T Rum*) identity lying beneath their Turkish national identity. What makes this possible is their belonging to the *ümmet* (Muslim community) which is supposed to unify and bring together all the ethnic groups in Turkey.

Undoubtedly the politically relaxed situation of recent years indicates that the chances are good for researchers to be granted official permission to undertake sociological research in the region. Indicative of the new relaxedness with regard to ethnic diversity and minorities in Turkey are the numerous books, films and documentaries that were published in the 2000s. MP songs such as those performed by Ayşenur Kolivar and her group Helesa are aired regularly by the official national television broadcasting

Continued

published. A website on the internet <http://www.lazuri.com> (accessed 20 June 2011) offers educational material and a freely accessible dictionary.

corporation (TRT), which was unthinkable before. The critical documentary film *Romeyika'nın Türküsü* ('The Song of MP', 2009) directed by the Turkish director Yeliz Karakütük is an example how easy it is now to talk of identity issues and sociolinguistic questions. Yeliz Karakütük was not only given permission to go to Ogene (Köknar, Karaçam) in order to shoot her documentary, but the film even received financial support from the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. This means that the Turkish government actively supported the featuring and promotion not only of a minority language but of a Greek dialect.

It is particularly interesting to hear one village woman at the end of the documentary commenting on the problems they encounter because of their language. In her next sentence she comes up with the assertion that they are *Rum*. This is something that would have been impossible in Turkey only one decade ago.

The language

The subdialects of Beşkøy and Sarachos as part of the Ophitic group

The fact that the Beşkøy villages were populated and founded by people who were originally from Holo, a group of villages on the Holo river which is a tributary of the Solaklı river, and also from the lower valleys of the Solaklı valley system gives reason to think that their dialect must be very similar to that of the Holo villages in the first instance and to the other Of dialects in the second instance. The data that I gathered and that are available to me confirm this assumption, so that we can by and large speak of one greater Ophitic dialect group that includes the Sürmene variants.

Nevertheless, despite their fairly recent separation from the Holo area, starting from the seventeenth century onwards, and despite the mutual routes that connect both areas to the outer world (and the social contacts that arise therefrom), their dialects show so many differences on various levels of language that we can speak of two separate subdialect groups within the larger group of Ophitic which can be seen in opposition to the second dialect of MP in Tonya.

In phonetics a striking difference is the pronunciation of /o/, which in some words is pronounced [o] in Beşkøy and [u] in Holo. An example is the word /'olo/ and /'olin/, where the Holo subdialect, like other Of subdialects, has /'ulo/ and /'ulin/. /'olo/ can mean 'all' if it is used as a singular pronoun or as predeterminer. Furthermore it can mean 'permanently' when it is used adverbially. /'olin/ 'all' is used as plural pronoun. The difference in pronunciation between the two vowels is so great that people from Beşkøy correct people from the Holo villages when they use [u] instead of [o].

Another typical phonetic peculiarity of Holo MP speakers is the lengthening of the vowel in the last syllable of words, especially at the end of a phrase [_V:#].

On the lexical and idiomatic level two examples, surprisingly of frequent daily usage, distinguish Holo and Beşkøy dialects. A person from Beşkøy says /'dos/ for 'how?'. In Holo they say /di 'laya/ instead. Likewise 'How are you?' in Beşkøy is

/ˈnɔso 'ise/ while in Holo they say /ˈlayos 'ise/ when a man is asked or /ˈlayesa 'ise/ when a woman is asked, which are exactly the same forms in the other subdialects of Of.

What can be the reason why both dialect groups drifted apart within only three centuries although contacts remained intact? One possible answer is the physical separation of the two valley systems. In spite of the yearly encounters on the way to the mountain pastures, the everyday life of Beşkøy was concentrated mostly on their own territory, which was isolated from the Holo villages by the wide mountain ridge between them. Elderly people from the Beşkøy villages today comment that in the past even between the villages of Beşkøy contact rather rarely occurred. Such visits would have been justified only by special occasions such as marriages where bride and groom were from two different villages. In the following subsections I present an overview of the phonology, morphology and syntax of the dialect of Beşkøy, while at the same time highlighting the differences from the subdialect of Sarachos that Mackridge described in his 1987 and 1999 publications.

Phonology

The MP of Beşkøy has a set of twenty-three phonologically distinct segments: eighteen consonants and six vowels.

Consonants

The plosives /b, d, g/ are realized as voiced plosives with fortis articulation: [b̥o'la] ‘much, many’. They become lenis after a nasal as in [ˈandras]. This is an intriguing phenomenon as there seems to be a link with a similar phenomenon in many of the Turkish dialects of the Eastern Black Sea. In these Turkish dialects, however, the variation is not confined to voicing of voiceless plosives that are realized as seen above. The variation also works in the opposite direction, in other words a slight to full devoicing with fortis articulation takes place; voiced plosives that have a phonemic status in Turkish are realized as aspirated, fortis voiced plosives, for example Standard Turkish [po'sta] versus Turkish of Beşkøy [p̥os'ɟa] ‘post-office’.¹⁸ Interestingly speakers of MP in Beşkøy pronounce Turkish voiceless plosives and voiced plosives in Turkish words exactly like the Turkish speakers of the surrounding areas – i.e. as less voiced, aspirated plosives with fortis articulation. It seems that the underlying set of voiceless plosives in the Pontic Greek dialects and the lack of a set of voiced counterparts had a direct influence on the Turkish dialects.

The voiceless labiodental fricative /f/ can replace the voiceless interdental fricative [θ] as in [ˈfia] = [ˈθia] ‘aunt’ or [ga'laf] = [ga'laθ] ‘basket’. The voiced labiodental fricative /v/ in intervocalic position [v] is sometimes replaced by the voiced velar or postvelar fricative [ɣ] as for example in [fo'vume] = [fo'ɣume] ‘I fear’ and [a'vudo] = [a'ɣudo] ‘this’. The phoneme /x/ is a voiceless uvular fricative IPA [χ] that can also pronounced as a velar

18 For this phenomenon in the Trabzon variant of Turkish which goes back to lenition and devoicing processes in Turkic languages since Old Turkish see B. Brendemoen, *The Turkish Dialects of Trabzon*, I (Wiesbaden 2002) 201–11.

fricative [x]. As in the dialects of Crete and Cyprus /x/ before front vowels become /f/ which is a distinct phoneme in MP (e.g. [ma'fer] 'knife' or [e'f] 'he has'). In some loanwords with Persian and Arabic origin the [x] reflects the original pronunciation, as in [χas'das] 'ill' from Persian [xæs'te] 'tired', [χo'dja] 'priest, imam' from Persian [xɒ:dʒæ] 'venerable man, master' or the male name [χe'li] from Turkish 'Halil' from Arabic [xa'li:l]. But even in cases where Arabic has glottal almost frictionless [h], as in [hawa:] 'air, weather' MP has [χe'vas] or the velar [x]. Puzzlingly the opposite case occurs with the pharyngeal [ħ] in Arabic as in [ħæ:fiz²] 'Koran reciter and male name' which becomes [ha'viz] in MP. Equally [ħu'ku:mæ] 'government' becomes [hugu'mæd]. It is difficult to fit the sound [h] into this picture. It is used in the preverbal particle for future constructions [ha] or conditional constructions [he]. In some cases [h] and [x] are interchangeable without the word becoming unintelligible or meaningless to the listener, as in [har] 'now', which can be pronounced [xar] – the more frequent version being [har]. I also came across [h] in intervocalic position as in [gahume] 'I sit' which can be pronounced as [gaxume] whereas it cannot be pronounced as [gaχume]. Other unequivocal occurrences of [h] are frequent in loanwords as in [hugu'mæd] 'government', [ha'man] 'now' (probably from Turkish *hemen* 'at once'). The voiceless palatal fricative /f/ historically developed out of specific contexts like consonant clusters before front vowel such as /sk/, e.g. [voʃgede] 'it grazes', and as /st/, e.g. [i'dera] 'afterwards'.¹⁹ The second origin of this phoneme is the old palatalization of /x/ before front vowels. /bs/ sometimes turns to /bf/ as in [bʃemata] 'lies' which is pronounced [psemata] in SMG. [bf] 'soul, life' is another example that can, however, be explained by contraction of the SMG word /psi'xi/. The phonemic status of the affricates /ds/ and /dj/ is problematic in Greek dialects, as Drettas and others have pointed out, because they can be analysed as consonant clusters consisting of the phonemes /d/ and /s/ or /d/ and /ʃ/ respectively.²⁰ In MP the phoneme /dj/ is a voiceless alveolar affricate, as exemplified in the word [dʃe'fal] 'head' or [dʃir] 'father'. It can be seen from the examples that [dj] in MP corresponds to the palatal allophone of /g/ in SMG [c] which occurs before or after a front vowel. Another example of [dj] in loanwords from Turkish is the Turkish *c* [dʒ] as in Turkish *camı* 'mosque' which is pronounced [dʃa'mɛ] by MP-speakers. Further examples are T *hacı* 'honorific title for Mecca pilgrim', which is pronounced [ha'dʃi], or *ciddi* 'serious, earnest' which becomes [dʃi'di]. Turkish *ç* [tʃ] is yet another origin of [dj] in MP, T *çarşı* 'town' corresponds to [dʃar'ʃi] in MP. Very often the sound [dj] is voiced and comes close to [dʒ] as in [e'bidʒe] 'he/she did'. The voiceless dental affricate /ds/ does not occur at the end of a word. When preceded by /n/, /ds/ is pronounced with [dz] as in [ɣan'dzi] 'leg'. The opposition between /ds/ and /s/ is neutralized in contexts where a nasal precedes /ds/. Consequently [ɣan'dzi] can be pronounced [ɣan'zi], where /s/ becomes [z] because of the preceding nasal.

19 A similar palatalization of /s/ takes place in the Turkish dialect of the villages in the district of Sürmene. Instead of *istemek* 'to want' it is possible to hear [iʃte'mek].

20 See Drettas, *Aspects*, 66 for references.

Vowels

In Beşköy unstressed /ia/ becomes [æ], /o'spidæ/ ('houses'), whereas in Sarachos and other Ophitic variants /ia/ becomes /e/: /o'sbide/.²¹ In Beşköy, when asked to articulate slowly a word that includes /æ/, informants tend to pronounce [ia]. This does not occur in the cases of /ðæ'veno/ 'to pass' or /ef'dæo/ 'I do', which may be due to the position within the word.

The rarely occurring vowel [œ] is a lower mid front rounded vowel which derives from stressed or unstressed /io/ as in ['fœn] 'snow' or [lœ'meno] 'molten'. Because of the rarity of words in which [œ] appears, all in the middle of a word, it is almost impossible to find minimal pairs without the recourse to Turkish loanwords where the corresponding vowel, i.e. ö [ø], occurs frequently. Mackridge notes that apart from the two vowels mentioned there are two more in Pontic: the high back unrounded [u] (T ι) and the high front rounded [y] (T ü) which occur exclusively in loanwords from Turkish.²² Even more than the uses of the occlusives /b, d, g/ discussed above, the uses of these vowels have to be considered in relation to their respective uses in the Turkish dialects of the area. One example:

The vowel ü [y] is articulated by MP speakers when they use Turkish loanwords. Many times I could spot the replacement of this sound by its unrounded counterpart [i] as in ['dʒingi] 'because' from Turkish *çünkü* 'because' or [dize'mena] 'lined up' from Turkish *düzmek* 'to lay out'.²³ In other contexts Turkish ü [y] becomes [u] as in the Turkish word *tüfek* 'rifle' which becomes [du'fedʃ] in MP.²⁴ In some cases T ü changes into [ʊ] as in the example [hugu'mæd] 'government' from T *hükümet* where the first ü becomes [ʊ] and the second becomes [u].

In contrast to Sarachos, in Beşköy post-tonic /i/ is deleted. In Sarachos: /o'bsarin/, Beşköy /o'bsar/ 'fish' and Sarachos /o'madin/, Beşköy /o'mad/ 'eye'. Partly due to this fact – i.e. deletion of unstressed /i/ at the end of a word – and partly due to the plethora of Turkish loanwords, MP allows any consonant in word-final position. Besides this general rule there are some instances where masculine proper names ending in /d/ or /z/ are modified, as for example T *Ahmet*, which becomes /o Ax'mejs/ in the nominative, or *Gormez* (from T *Görmez*), which becomes /o Gor'mejs/.

Stress

Instead of the 'three-syllable rule' Ophitic has 'columnar stress'.²⁵ The same applies to the subdialect of Beşköy. This phenomenon operates in both the verbal and the nominal systems. In a given verb paradigm the stress always remains on the syllable on which it falls in the first person singular. Object pronouns which derive from

21 Beşköy preserves an older pronunciation, which is also used by 'Christian' Pontic-speakers.

22 Mackridge, 'Prolegomena', 121.

23 Brendemoen, *Turkish*, I, 74: *duşti* for Standard Turkish *düştü* or *misilmanlık* for Standard Turkish *müslümanlık*.

24 Ibid.

25 Mackridge, 'Prolegomena', 122.

Ancient Greek enclitic personal pronouns have become personal object suffixes that are added to the inflected verb (agglutination). Let us look at the verb form /egonu'jefgumune/ 'I talked': /egonu'jefgudunemasuna/ 'he talked to us' (/egonu'jefgudune/ 'he talked' + the personal suffix /-masuna/ 'to us', which is a variant of the equally used /-mas/ 'to us'; note the use of the accusative for the indirect object, which is a peculiarity of MP syntax.). As shown in this example, stress can even be on the seventh syllable from the end. This extreme must not blur the fact that the fourth syllable from the end is often as far as it goes in daily speech. Instead of /egonu'jefgudunemasuna/ 'he talked to us' one may hear /e'mas egonu'jefgudune/ 'to us he talked'. Columnar stress in adjectives and nouns means that the stress of the masculine nominative singular remains where it is in all other cases and in combination with personal pronouns, e.g. /i gars'liyenamuna/ 'our woman from Kars'. A stress shift occurs in the gen. sg. of neuter nouns such as to /yar'ðel/ 'the child' (nom. sg.), /du yarðe'li/ (gen. sg.).

Morphology

Nouns and noun phrases

Among the characteristics of MP noun morphology are the plural endings, which are often identical across the different inflectional types of the two genders masculine and feminine. See for example the following forms:

Masculine: /o gom'fis/ 'the neighbour'

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	o gom'fis	i gom'fiðæs
Acc.	don gom'fi	dsi gom'fiðæs
Gen.	du gom'fi	dsi gom'fiðæs

/o 'andras/ 'man, husband'

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	o 'andras	i an'druðæs
Acc.	don 'andra	dsi an'druðæs
Gen.	d an'dru	dsi an'druðæs

Feminine: /i 'mana/ 'mother'

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	i 'mana	da ma'naðæs or 'manas
Acc.	di 'mana	dsi ma'naðæs
Gen.	dsi 'manas	dsi ma'naðæs

Neuter: /d o'sbi/ 'house'

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	d o'sbi	da o'sbidæ
Acc.	d o'sbi	da o'sbidæ
Gen.	d osbi'di	da o'sbidæ

Note the shift of the stress in the gen. sg. form to the last syllable of the word in the above paradigms of the neuter /d o'sbi/ and the irregular masculine /o 'andras/ which does not occur in other regular forms ending in /as/. The noun /o ba'bugas/ 'the grandpa' has two possible plural forms. The first form ending in /and/ is generally used for masculines – peoples, families, relatives, professions and some animals. The second form is the form that we saw above. Other nouns, too, show two declensions in the plural paradigm. The forms ending in /æðæs/ are tending to supersede the forms with /and/:

/o ba'bugas/ 'the grandpa'

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	o ba'bugas	i ba'bugand or i babu'gaðæs
Acc.	don ba'buga	dsi ba'bugandus or dsi babu'gaðæs
Gen.	du ba'buga	dsi ba'bugandus or dsi babu'gaðæs

The second important characteristic of MP noun morphology that I want to discuss here is the spread of plural neuter forms of nouns (together with the articles and adjectives that accompany them) to the masculine and feminine paradigms. The declension of /o vu'ðias/ 'the ox' borrows the plural forms from the neuter paradigm:

/o vu'ðias/ 'the ox'

	Singular	Plural
Nom.	o vu'ðias	da vu'ðia
Acc.	don vu'ðia	da vu'ðia
Gen.	du vu'ðia	da vu'ðia

A special case is the noun /o be'ðas/ 'the boy'. The singular forms are identical to the masculine nouns ending in /as/. The plural forms, however, are borrowed from the neuter paradigm, with the exception of the gen. pl., which is [da beði'ji] or [da beði'ði] instead of [da be'ðia], i.e. it shows a shift in stress and a possible assimilation of the glide /j/ to /ð/

after the stem vowel /i/, which may go back to the stress shift in the genitive forms of the singular neuter paradigm (see paradigm of /o'sbi/ 'house' above):

/o be'ðas/ 'the boy'

	Singular		Plural	
Nom.	o	be'ðas	da	be'ðia
Acc.	don	be'ða	da	be'ðia
Gen.	du	be'ða	da	beði'ði

This spread of the neuter is also obvious within the singular paradigm of the nouns. See for example this sentence: /'iba do Mela'had/ 'I told Melahat'. In this case the neut. sg. article /do/ is used in connection with a female name.

There is no room here for a detailed discussion of the articles, which apart from the spread of the neuter plural article /da/ referred to above show an array of different forms in the masculine and feminine plural paradigms.

When used together with the locative preposition /s/ and the ablative preposition /as/ the article drops its plosive /d/. Thus /sda xo'rafæ/ becomes [sa xo'rafæ] 'in the fields'. Similarly /asda 'Surmena/ becomes [asa 'Surmena] 'from Sürmene'. Although MP prepositions are normally followed by the accusative, there are instances where a preposition is followed by a noun phrase in the genitive, as in SMG. Firstly in genitive constructions the preposition + article combination is placed before the qualifying noun of the genitive construction: /si 'mana s o'sbi/ 'in the mother's house'. Likewise the preposition + article combination can be used with a proper name in the genitive: /su da'im er'θafa/ 'I was brought up at my uncle's (place)' or /su mal'godʃ ebu'ga/ 'under Malkotsh' (place). This elliptical construction is most probably due to the dropping of the qualified noun, namely the 'place' written in brackets above. The following example shows how this elliptical construction is not only restricted to places that belong to somebody. Let us consider this tooth-prayer where the child who loses one of its milk teeth throws it on the roof of a house, invoking the sky to make a new, stronger and whiter tooth grow:

/ura'no 'na 'ðond 'ðome 'ðond 'asi 'gadas as'bridero 'asu 'jgil gaj'modero/

'Oh sky! There's a tooth, give me a tooth whiter than the cat's, stronger than the dog's.'

The /'asi/ is the ablative preposition together with the fem. sg. genitive article /di/. In full this would read /asi 'gadas do 'ðond/, literally 'of the cat the tooth', and /asu 'jgil do 'ðond/ 'of the dog the tooth'.

Adjectives

Similarly to the noun declensions and the articles, neuter adjectives tend to supersede feminine ones. But more importantly, the masculine and the feminine forms are only used when the adjective stands alone, i.e. when it is used predicatively: /'ise ga'lesa/ 'You are good.' In a phrase where the adjective is used attributively the feminine form

cannot be used. Thus */i ga'lesa i 'mana/ 'the good woman' is not correct. Instead the neuter form /do ga'lo i 'mana/ is used. In contrast to the neuter forms in Sarachos presented by Mackridge, in Beşköy these forms are not only used for all non-human feminines and inanimate masculines in the plural, but also for masculine humans in the singular as in /do ga'lo o 'arθobos/ 'the good man' instead of */o ga'los o 'arθobos/ as would be expected.²⁶

Pronominal suffixes

Among the most characteristic features of MP morphology are the various pronominal suffixes described by Mackridge and others.²⁷ These suffixes, such as the possessive suffix /(e)mun(a)/ 'our', are added to the noun, e.g. /do xo'rafimuna/ 'our field'.

Mackridge does not mention the pronominal suffixes for the 3rd sg. in MP, e.g. for masculine and neuter /(a)na/ and for feminine /(a)næ/ although they exist in the Sarachos subdialect, too: /'iðana/ 'I saw him' and 'I saw it', /'iðanæ/ 'I saw her'. When combined with a verb ending in the vowel /e/ the sound /y/ is added between the verb and the pronominal suffix, as in /e'gudebseyana/ 'he/she taught him/it'. When suffixed to a verb that ends with the 3rd person plural ending /an(e)/ one /an/ is elided. Thus, instead of /'eleya-nana/ we find the contracted form /'eleyana/ 'they used to tell him/it.' /na/ alone refers to something that has been mentioned before in a conversation, a preceding sentence, or the same sentence. It is not, however, as specific as the two other neuter suffixes, namely /(a)do/ and /(a)da/. The neuter pronominal suffix /(a)na/ in combination with a direct object can be combined with the other neuter suffixes /do/ and /da/ after imperative forms. For example, for 'say it' a speaker from Beşköy says /'ibena/ when referring to something that has been said before but /'ibenato/ when referring to a specific item, e.g. 'the word'. In the following two lines from a song both suffixes appear together in a larger context: the second clitic is the neuter plural form which specifically refers back to the hair /da ma'lias/: /'xdenigso da ma'lias 'biso-na-da ibri'jim/ 'comb your hair / and make it into a plait'. However, in contrast to the forms /'iðana/ and /e'gudebseyana/ the /n/ in the suffix may go back to an underlying imperative form /'bison/. According to this assumption the /n/ from the imperative resurfaces and coincides with the /n/ of the pronominal suffix /na/. That said, it remains unclear why the singular form /na/ can be combined with the plural neuter form /da/.

Another interesting example of clitic pronouns in MP is the 3rd person possessive pronominal suffix /θe/ or /eθe/ which is used mainly for inanimate objects: /to de'bsi so 'jerneθe 'θeso/ 'put the tray into its place.' The word /'jerneθe/ results from MP /'jer/ 'place' (T yer) followed by the possessive suffix /eθe/ 'its'. The /n/ between the stem and the suffix goes back to the underlying form of nouns of this class of neuters which is /'jerin/. The /n/ resurfaces when the suffix begins with a vowel. It can, however, also be used for animate beings such as animals and babies as in the following example:

26 Ibid., 128.

27 Ibid., 125; Drettas, *Aspects*, 250; Bortone, 'Greek with no models', 84.

/ 'ena 'zom son bar 'xar 'efera ebif 'dera so ga 'doi so 'jerneθe 'efigado/ 'I brought one of my cows to the mountain pasture, then I left it in its place in the basement.' Although the last example, which I actually heard this way, shows the suffix in the middle of a sentence, the normal position of the suffix is at the end of a sentence, as in the former two examples. As a result the sentence in question would normally end like this: /efigado so 'jerneθe/ 'I put it back in its place.'

Verbs

Some of the characteristics of MP verb morphology such as columnar stress and the personal suffixes that are added to the verb have already been discussed above. While the other morphology sections deal with inflectional morphology this section centres on the derivational morphology of verbs.

In contrast to Mackridge's findings, the suffix /evo/ is not the only one used for forming MP verbs from the Turkish present stem, as in /ara'evə/ from T *ara-* 'seek'.²⁸ The suffix /(i)zo/, too, is used to form verbs by adding it to the Turkish present stem, e.g. /daja'nizo/ 'I endure' from T *dayan-* 'endure'. But while the morpheme /ev/ is used almost exclusively to form verbs from Turkish verb stems, the morphemes with /z/ have different characteristics and functions: they form verbs from nouns, as in the case of /ðruva'nizo/ 'to churn', which derives from the noun /ðru'van/ 'churn', or /fo'sizo/ 'to be lit, to shine' from /'fos/ 'light'. Secondly they may add a factitive or causative meaning to transitive verbs, as in /ma'θano/ 'to learn' versus /ma'θizo/ 'to teach' i.e. 'to cause to learn'. Thirdly they make transitive or factitive/causative verbs out of intransitive ones, as in /fo'vume/ 'to be scared' and /fovo'rizo/ 'to scare' which seems to go back to an underlying adjective /fove'ro/ + /izo/ with assimilation of [e] to [o]. Lastly this morpheme is frequently used for forming onomatopoeic verbs such as /dsadsa'lizo/ 'to weed, pick', /dsundsu'rizo/ 'to perforate'.

Syntax

For practical reasons I have already referred to syntactic peculiarities in the above discussions of nouns, articles, adjectives, pronominal suffixes and the verb, and I will not repeat them here.

Tense and mood

In contrast to Sarachos, besides the particle /na/ the particle /ha/ is used in some contexts to form the future tense, which brings it closer to SMG. The contexts for the use of /ha/ instead of /na/ are the following: 1) in negated sentences: /'udʒe ha 'fdæo ado/ 'I will not do it',²⁹ and 2) in interrogative sentences such as /'n de ha 'fdæo/ 'What will I do?' The

28 Mackridge, 'Prolegomena', 127.

29 Note that the negative particle for the indicative /'udʒ/ (before vowel), /'u/ (before consonants of stressed syllables: /'u 'θelo/ 'I do not want') or /u'dʒe/ (before consonants of unstressed syllables /'udʒe ha 'fdæo/ 'I will not do') is used in all Ophitic subdialects, whereas in Tonya /g^hi/ is used instead, as in the Pontic spoken in Greece.

same question with the particle /na/ is also possible, but with a modal sense: /ⁿde na 'fdæo/ 'What can I (possibly) do?'

Aspect

A construction that is not mentioned by Mackridge but exists in both subdialects is a construction with the invariable auxiliary /'eʃi/ (before consonant) or /'eʃ/ (before vowel) together with the finite form of a verb as in /'eʃ 'erxume/ 'I am coming.' Like the English present and past continuous tenses, this construction expresses the progressive aspectual feature, i.e. that an action is in the process of being performed at a certain point in time. In past constructions /'eʃ/ is used with finite imperfect verbs /'eʃ 'erxumune/ 'I was coming.' The negation of these continuous forms is considered to be artificial, or a derisive negation of the proposition as a whole.

Another construction that is not mentioned by Mackridge is the periphrastic construction consisting of finite verb + /'dʃe/ + finite form of /'sdego/ 'to stand' or /'gaxume/ 'to sit', for example /'ɣrafo 'dʃe 'sdego/ 'I keep writing'. These constructions express an action that is in progress and lasts for a longer time. The past tense is constructed with the past of the imperfective stem of both the auxiliary and the full verb: /'eglosgumune dʃ 'esdega/ 'I kept turning.' These periphrastic constructions are probably based on Turkish. In Turkish, however, the main verb is a non-finite verb form: *çalışıp duruyorum* 'I keep working' where *çalışıp* is the non-finite participle of the verb *çalışmak* 'to work' made up of the root *çalış-* and the participle suffix *-ıp*.

The inflected derivative of the infinitive

The morphological form which derives from the historical infinitive differs in several ways from the Sarachos type described by Mackridge.³⁰ The outstanding feature of the Beşkøy derivative of this form is that active past personal endings are added to the infinitive, thus making it inflected. This differs from the varieties of Uzungöl (Sarachos), Karaçam (Ogene), among other dialects of Of, where the infinitive does not have personal endings. The inflected derivative of the infinitive is formed from the perfective verb stem and the morpheme /in/ or /n/ followed by the active past tense personal endings. Here is an example of the construction where the inflected infinitive is used in irrealis constructions: /do i'ladʃ 'n' iʃe ali'bsines 'har ga'lo jen'dusune/ 'If you had applied the ointment, now you would have been well.' The form consists of the perfective stem /alib/ + the morpheme /in/ and the personal ending /es/. It is notable that the auxiliary /'iʃe/ is invariable, thus differing from Deffner's example referred to by Mackridge where both the auxiliary and the infinitive are inflected: /an 'iʃede me'θisinede me, 'ixa ba'θina bo'la/ 'If you had made me drunk, I would have suffered a lot.'

The infinitive is also used after the negated past tense of the verbs /'θelo/ 'I want' and /bo'ro/ 'I can' in Beşkøy as it is in Sarachos, except that Beşkøy uses the inflected form:

30 Mackridge, 'Of', 102–3.

/ʊdʃ e'θelesa borba'desna/ 'I did not want to walk', /ʊdʃ e'borese borba'desnes/ 'You could not walk.'

As shown in the above examples, the infinitive does not occur independently, i.e. it is always part of a specific syntactic construction. The contexts where the infinitive occurs in one subdialect are not necessarily the same in another subdialect. In contrast to Sarachos, the infinitive is not used after /'brin/ 'before' in Beşköy.

Vocabulary

In terms of vocabulary the variation between the two subdialects is considerable. Curiously enough, many basic words and words of daily use are different. As in SMG and in other Pontic dialects, Beşköy uses /'ja/ 'for' instead of /'ðe/ in Sarachos, which is unique. The expression mentioned above with regard to the Holo villages /'layos 'ise/ 'How are you?' is the same in Sarachos when referring to a person or other item. The same question in Beşköy is /'ndoso 'ise/³¹ The first word may derive from /'n'do 'soi/ 'of what type', i.e. 'how'. In fact the same word is used for 'how' in Beşköy, as opposed to the adverb /'laya/ (when referring to an action /'laya/ is used instead of /'layos/) in Saracho which presumably has the same origin as the adjective /'layos/ (Mackridge proposes $\tau\iota$ λογής as a possibility).³² In Sarachos they use /o'ðen/ for the interrogative pronoun 'why?' whereas in Beşköy they say /'ja 'bio/ 'for which?' or 'for what?' which may also go back to T *niçin* < *ne için* 'for what?' = 'why?' Sarachotes say /'gal/ 'again', which is unknown to Beşköy people, who rather employ /'alo 'mia/ 'once again'. Sarachotes use also /'alo 'mian/ which is probably more emphatic than /'gal/. Other words are /or'min/ 'river', which exists in Sarachos, while in Beşköy they use /bo'dam/, and /yar'go/ 'ox' which in Beşköy is /vu'ðias/.³³ /yar'i'befgume/ 'I miss' (< T *garip* < Ar. *yari:b* 'stranger; strange') in Sarachos is not used in Beşköy, which uses /ero'θimesa/ instead.

Conclusion

Almost twenty-five years after Mackridge visited the region the same communities actively speak and pass on MP in the villages of Beşköy, Of, and Çaykara. Although migration and other adverse factors constantly erode the language, it proves to be resilient enough to remain a preferred means of communication when MP-speakers come together. The individual accounts of people showed that they can very well identify themselves with the language they speak. Some of them even acknowledge that they are Greek. The question how they define their identity and how they see their language is a promising path for future research.

31 The superscript ⁿ in /'ndoso/ and /'n'do/ accounts for the prenasalization of /d/.

32 Ibid., 103.

33 According to Papadopoulos' dictionary (s.v.) /yar'gon/ means 'a young, ungelded ox'.

Apart from touching on the question of language and identity I also presented the area of Beşköy, its geography, and the living conditions of its population while trying to show to what extent their language is linked to agriculture and life in the mountains. I presume that any move away from these original living conditions is likely to diminish the diversity of forms and constructions within the language. Finally I discussed the most striking characteristics of the subdialect of Beşköy, with special emphasis on the differences from the dialect of Sarachos that has been examined by Mackridge.

The remaining desiderata for future research are a complete and a contrastive grammar of at least two of the subdialect groups of Of and Beşköy,³⁴ and one complete grammar of the distinct dialect of Tonya. After that a thorough study of the differences between the individual villages would yield substantial information on the division of subdialects into groups. Lastly the considerable influence of Turkish on the lexicon, morphology, and syntax of MP needs to be investigated in detail.

34 I am currently working on a complete grammar of the dialect of Beşköy.

Reviews

Niketas Siniossoglou, *Radical Platonism in Byzantium: Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon*. Cambridge: CUP, 2011. Pp. xvi, 454.

George Gemistos Plethon was undoubtedly one of the most intriguing minds to emerge from the Byzantine era. In recent years he has received his fair share of scholarly attention, with numerous papers and even some full-length monographs devoted to discussing the nature, sources and legacy of his version of Platonism, his programme for political reform and the fascinating issue of the scope and sincerity of his pagan beliefs.

In Niketas Siniossoglou's new book the stakes are higher. Plethon is made out to have 'brought ... pre-existing tendencies towards a distinctive anti-Christian and pagan outlook to their conclusion' (p. 399) and to have been 'the first to define the philosophical properties of a pre-existing Platonic ideal-type that ... ultimately evolved within modernity and early Enlightenment into ... modern paganism' (p. 38).

Any Neopagans elated at the prospect of new evidence in support of an uninterrupted chain between them and their ancient brothers in the faith will be disappointed. What Siniossoglou calls 'paganism' is not a cult practice or a set of religious beliefs. He is talking about 'philosophical' paganism (pp. 13–19 *et passim*), and by that he means roughly any sort of intellectual activity that conforms to a certain 'trans-historical paradigm' (p. xi) of Platonism. What qualifies this paradigm as 'pagan' is its radical incompatibility with Christian Orthodoxy (p. 18). It is alternately described (and treated) as a 'real mode of being' (p. xi) and a 'mental construct' (*ibid.*).

Siniossoglou never provides a formal definition, but 'philosophical paganism' seems crucially to involve the view that all truths are naturally accessible to the human reason. If Christian Orthodoxy typically insists that some truths are available only by special dispensation from God, then, this would seem to be the sticking point. One problem with this dichotomy is that it leaves out of the account some historically very important branches of Platonism (including Christian ones). But let us assume for the sake of the argument that it still manages to capture the essence of 'philosophical paganism'.

It is not news that many Byzantine authors were sympathetic towards certain aspects of Platonism, apparently in the conviction that these aspects were perfectly compatible with their Christian faith. At least that is what they said and how they acted. With the possible exception of Plethon, none of them were, in their own view, pagans. This is not to say that none of them were accused by their philosophical, theological or political opponents of being pagans. In fact, as Siniossoglou shows, many of them were.

Leaving aside the possibility that they may all have meant something entirely different by 'paganism' and assuming that (philosophical) paganism is correctly characterized as (global) 'epistemic optimism' (p. 42), it should be easy to ascertain whether it was the Platonizers or their opponents who were in the right. I for one am not aware of any Byzantine philosopher or theologian before Plethon who claimed that human beings are capable of attaining all truth without divine assistance. Nor is Siniossoglou, I presume, for otherwise he would have told us. The conclusion seems to be that no Byzantine Platonizers were philosophical pagans. However, Siniossoglou points to a couple of complications. (1) The pagans may have chosen not to commit their real views to ink and parchment. (2) Philosophical paganism may have been 'unconsciously yet potentially present' (p. 256).

I think both these hypotheses could be shown to be very probably false, at least if one allows oneself to formulate them more precisely. To begin with (1) the dissimulation hypothesis, it is not so easy in the first place to see why well-established individuals in the upper echelons of the state and church hierarchies (from emperors and patriarchs on down) would keep returning so obsessively to themes on which they secretly harboured sinful views, especially if they could not help but give themselves away. And if they did give themselves away, as Siniossoglou argues, it is hard to see how we could be justified in accusing them of dissimulation.

Obviously, nobody seeks to conceal errors of which he or she is (2) not conscious. As for 'potentially present', it is admittedly possible that the 'humanism' of the fourteenth century was in *some* ways a necessary condition for the emergence of Plethon's paganism, even if it seems unlikely that the latter is dependent on any fourteenth-century *philosophical* developments. But it certainly was not a sufficient condition. If this is Siniosoglou's claim, then it is refuted by the historical fact that most prominent anti-Palamites after 1351 turned not to paganism but to Catholicism. In the historical context, Thomism rather than Plethonism would seem to have been the natural conclusion of fourteenth-century humanism.

To my mind, it would be far more reasonable to assume that most of the Byzantine laity and some of the clergy considered exposure to moderate doses of Platonism to be harmless and perhaps to some degree even beneficial as far as their salvation was concerned. This hypothesis has the further advantage of being in agreement with what the Platonizers themselves said.

Not, it is true, with what their detractors said. Siniosoglou gives systematic priority to the latter's testimony – even if he does not seem to take their accusations of pagan worship and satanism seriously – over the Platonizers' own words. Gregory Palamas, Neilos Kerameus and Philotheos Kokkinos are the main authorities for Barlaam's views (I think Barlaam is quoted once). Other Platonizers' works have been consulted, but in a highly selective manner. Not a word is said about the epistemic *pessimism* or the Christian *fideism* so pronounced in many works by Theodore Metochites and Nikephoros Gregoras. Interpretations of the texts are often alarmingly tendentious. When John Italos is expounding the orthodox Aristotelian view that logic is an instrument not a part of philosophy, this is taken as a 'particularly bold and straightforward attack on Aristotelianism' and a clear attempt 'to reclaim Plato' (p. 83).

One is led to suppose that this is the kind of methodology required to actualize the paganism potentially present in Byzantium. I do not think it is worth it. I find it regrettable that Siniosoglou did not concentrate his efforts on pursuing some of his more promising ideas, so as to show, for instance, how Plethon's project could be understood primarily in terms of a non-Catholic (or *Greek*) reaction to the ascendancy of Palamism, or whether it is a correct impression that Plethon to some extent marks a return to a pre-Plotinian paradigm of Platonic exegesis.

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Jean Géomètre, *Poèmes en hexamètres et en distiques élégiaques*, ed., tr. & comm. Emilie Marlène van Opstall. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2008. Pp. xv, 606.

Byzantine literature has had its fair share of critics. Much of the prose, especially that most prized at the time of writing by contemporary literary *coteries*, offends a modern taste averse to the highly wrought. This is particularly true of speeches delivered on formal occasions. Rhetors, out to impress and to test their audiences, strove too strenuously for *asapheia*, obscurity. Gibbon goes too far, of course, but there is a fair amount of truth in his withering remarks about their choice of 'gigantic and obsolete words, a stiff and intricate phraseology, the discord of images' ... in prose 'soaring to the vicious affectation of poetry'. But authors who did not stray beyond the bounds of the familiar, mandarin Greek used by the educated and official classes in everyday life could produce elegant, entertaining, informative works, especially in the fields of history and hagiography. The *Material for a History* of Nikephoros Bryennios and the *Life of Philaretos of Amnia* by his grandson are hard to match for narrative flow and nuanced portraiture.

What then of literature proper? Relatively little was produced in the eight centuries of post-Roman existence. The Byzantine intelligentsia remained all too aware of the great writers of classical antiquity, above all of Homer, the Attic tragedians and Aristophanes, as well as their Hellenistic and Roman successors. The past, as well as the pressing practical concerns of the present, undoubtedly deterred them from many types of literary venture. But the romance, both in prose and verse, was revived, and faith proved a powerful creative force, manifesting itself in hymnography and private devotional poetry. Other motive forces, the perennial search for patronage on the part of bright young writers, the lauding of the great and the good, the commemoration of buildings and works of art, the disparaging of rivals *etc.* continued to generate poetry generation after generation.

John Geometres was the brightest literary star of his day, a beneficiary of the ninth-century revival of literature which reached a first apogee with the appearance of the *Anthology* of Constantine Kephala at the end of the century and a second in the age of Constantine Porphyrogenitus

(913–59). While he was ready to bare his soul in public and was far from reticent about his own abilities and achievements, John is relatively uninformative about the externals of his life. Van Opstall builds on the detective work of Marc Lauxtermann in her biographical sketch of his life (ch. 1). He was born between 935 and 940 into a well-to-do family, the second son of a much-travelled government official. He gained celebrity at an early age. He was an admirer of Nikephoros Phokas, both in life and death. He mourned the passing of a great judge, Theodore Dekapolites, in one of several elegant epitaphs dating from the 960s. In the 970s he gained the favour of the *de facto* ruler of the empire, the Chamberlain (*Parakoimomenos*) Basil, illegitimate son of Romanos Lekapenos. Two poems written in his honour, one of which is an *ekphrasis* of his country estate, take *enkōmion* to extraordinary heights. He refers to his personal involvement in combat, from which an army career has been inferred. The fall of his patron Basil (in 985) and slanderous attacks from his enemies led to his dismissal, and later to retreat to the monastery τὰ τοῦ Κύπου, near the Gate of St. Romanos in the land walls of Constantinople. He died around the year 1000.

Van Opstall has selected John's most difficult poems. Rather than the iambs which flowed from his pen, and in which his masterpieces were written – his laudations of Nikephoros and Basil, his advocacy of the case for the compatibility of physical prowess and intelligence, his denunciations of the evils of civil war ... she homes in on his occasional verse, religious and profane, written in hexameters and elegiac couplets (also used in his hymns on the Holy Virgin, the most popular of his poems). They create much more work for the philologist, work which she evidently relishes and carries out to the highest possible standard. Several introductory chapters follow that on John's life, all models of lucid exposition: the literary context and chief characteristics of his verse are detailed, with special attention paid to the different uses of the first person and the genre of *ekphrasis*, of which he is a master (ch. 2); his language and versification are subjected to meticulous scrutiny in chapters which display van Opstall's philological expertise to best advantage (ch. 3–4); finally she discusses the transmission of John's work to later generations, examines the two extant manuscripts and outlines her editorial principles (ch. 5–7). She goes on to edit and translate 63 poems, ranging from two-line epigrams to an evocation of spring and melancholy contemplation of the poet's condition (described as a living corpse, stripped of his possessions, maligned, like a tree uprooted in a storm) in 121 lines (no. 300) and a self-abasing prayer (no. 290, 150 lines). Philological analysis and identification of sources are carried out in footnotes, more general commentary on historical and literary matters being hived off into annexes. She completes the volume with a concordance of poems and three indices.

John's special talent was linguistic. He shows astonishing ingenuity in fitting what he wants to say into the uncongenial format of the hexameter, classical Greek being a language far better suited to iambs. He could call on a capacious lexicon of arcane, long-obsolete words and phrases, drawn chiefly from Homer and Gregory of Nazianzos. Van Opstall rouses the reader's admiration as she elucidates each successive puzzling passage or apparently barbarous word (for example, κύντερον, 'more doglike' [147.1], ἐρικυδέα, 'glorious' [290.1], ὑποφῆται, 'prophets' [290.3], μυστιπτόλων, 'priests' [289.13, 290.5] ...). Extraordinary verbal contortions and virtuoso shows of wordplay and paradox front but do not conceal the meaning and feelings of a very fine poet.

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Ruth Macrides (ed.), *History as Literature in Byzantium: Papers from the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, April 2007*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010. Pp. xxv, 324.

Spring Symposia come and go, but some bear richer fruit and yield a better result in terms of scholarship than others. The fortieth one, held in 2007 and dedicated to the topic of Byzantine historiography, has blossomed into the present volume, a collection of essays that are of great interest to historians and literary scholars alike, for which Ruth Macrides, the editor, deserves warm applause and lusty cheers.

Stratis Papaioannou discusses the 'aesthetics of history', which he sees reflected in metaphors related to sculpture and statues. Brian Croke offers a remarkably full survey of explicit references to, and the implicit presence of, the intended audiences of histories and chronicles throughout the Byzantine millennium. John Davis presents the mid fourteenth-century *metaphraseis* of Anna

Komnene and Choniates. Michael Jeffreys compares the evidence of Psellos' letters with his *Chronographia* and concludes that the letters offer a radically different picture of Psellos' position at court from that sketched in his history. Teresa Shawcross attempts to show that the narrator in the *Chronicle of Morea* tells his story in the guise of an oral bard. Roger Scott offers a fascinating insight into the ways in which good stories are constantly retold, reworked and adapted from one chronicle to the other. George Calofonos discusses dream narratives in Theophanes. Nicolette Trahoulia discusses the miniatures in ms. 5 of the Hellenic Institute in Venice, a copy of the *Alexander Romance* produced in Trebizond for Alexios III Komnenos, which she argues served a performative role. Stephanos Efthymiadis offers a brilliant re-reading of Theophylaktos Simokattes within the context of the later reign of Herakleios. Martin Hinterberger discusses the concept of *Phthonos* in Byzantine historiography and shows that reversals of fortune are presented as the work of the devil. Dmitry Afinogenov presents a detailed account of how the downfall of Patriarch Constantine II is portrayed in Theophanes and George the Monk. Elena Boeck discusses the visualization of the past in two illustrated manuscripts, the Madrid Skylitzes and the Vatican Manuscripts, and offers an insightful analysis of the ideological premises on which the choice of the images is based. Konstantinos Zafeiris examines the fusion of hagiography and historiography in the chronicle of Skoutariotes. Anthony Kaldellis revisits Prokopios and uncovers the thematic unity of the *Persian War*. Paolo Odorico focuses his attention on associative trains of thought in Malalas. Athanasios Angelou discusses the influence of rhetoric on the history of Niketas Choniates.

The only thing missing in this dazzling array of subtle readings and astute analyses is an answer, or at least an attempt at an answer, to a number of self-evident questions. If 'history is literature' (as the editor puts it in the preface), what happens to the whole notion of history as an autonomous branch of the humanities? If text is all there is, does it leave any margins for context? Are we caught in a Nietzschean 'prison house of language', from which there is no escape? Ever since the linguistic turn has become the new orthodoxy, we have learned its catechism of 'reality' as socially constructed and 'meaning' as symbolic and embedded in language. It is a dominant 'discourse' that leaves little room for traditional explanatory frameworks, such as causality and social agency, and tends to blur the distinction between material sources (archaeological sites, seals, coins, etc.), archival sources (documents, notarial acts, treaties, etc.) and literary sources. It all becomes text. And to quote the archdeacon of deconstruction, there is 'nothing beyond the text'.

It is only fair to admit that the papers in this collective volume do indirectly address some of these issues, either by focusing on contextual aspects, such as intended audience (Croke, Trahoulia) and authorial intentions (Efthymiadis, Boeck, Kaldellis), formal aspects, such as linguistic choices (Davis), narration (Scott, Shawcross), literary and rhetorical strategies (Papaioannou, Calofonos, Angelou, Odorico), or intratextual aspects (Jeffreys, Hinterberger, Afinogenov, Zafeiris). But this marvellous volume would have been even more marvellous if there had been at least one paper indicating to historians that all is not lost in these Derrida(da)ist times. Yes, there is nothing but the text, and to understand historical sources, one should be particularly sensitive to matters of form and language. But no: *pace* Derrida, there are historical contexts and without these, texts make no sense whatsoever.

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Andrekos Varnava, *British Imperialism in Cyprus, 1878–1915: the inconsequential possession*. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2009. Pp. xiii, 321.

The historiography of Cyprus lacks a broadly conceived overview of the period from British occupation in 1878 through to the First World War. Unfortunately Andrekos Varnava's book does not entirely fill this gap. This is not for lack of thorough research and interesting information. The coverage, however, is episodic and fragmentary. The principal idea left in the reader's mind is that the island lost whatever fleeting significance it ever had for the British very soon after 1878, and never really regained it.

'Historians have not included Cyprus in explanations of imperialism' (p. 8) the author notes at the outset. But then how could they? Although the island rather belatedly became part of the formal British Empire in 1925, it never became the *locus* for imperialism as a substantive phenomenon: that is, as a place of settlement, regional expansion and the projection of military force on a

large-scale. From the outset of the British presence, Cyprus drifted far to the margins of imperial strategy, bereft of any rationale, defended by a miniscule garrison, and invariably ignored by the Royal Navy. To that extent the title of Varnava's book skews the discussion from the start, since it implies a search for what turns out to be a missing body.

The strength of Varnava's book is indeed to evoke the fragility of the assorted motivations behind Benjamin Disraeli's *coup de theatre* in taking Cyprus in the first place. There is a store of neat quotations here to illustrate the theme. The author shows very fully how Disraeli's action – precisely because it *was* by Disraeli – made the island a point of ideological contestation between British Liberal-Radicals and Conservatives in their climactic age of rivalry. The one generally spat upon the liability of Cyprus, whilst the other sought to make sure that what had been done in 1878 was not wholly reversed. Such a tit-for-tat continued through the 1890s, but by the early twentieth century lost all relevance. By then the banality of Cyprus in relation to the British presence became stark: as a possession it lacked the attributes that made it worthwhile doing anything with, yet preserving the precarious stability of the eastern Mediterranean equally made it impolitic to actually contemplate withdrawal. This allowed a rather dull charade to continue.

Moving, as Varnava does, from this practical theme to the realm of culture and 'imperial imagination' dating from Richard the Lion-Heart's crusading involvement in Cypriot affairs during the 1180s, however, gets onto very unstable ground. For one thing, modern historians make unpersuasive experts on medieval times. We are told, for example, that in England during the thirteenth century 'even the poor ... were passionate about reaching Jerusalem' (p. 47). But how can we know? It seems more probable that they cared even less about external affairs than did a later proletariat. After a brief digression on so-called English orientalist texts of the Elizabethan period, including Shakespeare's alleged geopolitical concerns in *Othello*, the treatment jumps suddenly to British 'men on the spot' during the break-up of the Ottoman empire. Apart from highly schematic discontinuities, this section of the book illustrates the dangers of a 'cod culturalism' often marring recent history writing.

The following two chapters on the 1880s and 1890s, featuring the increasingly glaring gap between illusion and reality under the occupation, are more satisfactory. The unhealthy conditions endured by British troops, the failure to develop Famagusta harbour, and the block on economic development entailed by the complex operation of the Tribute – initially still given to the Sultan, and then diverted to French bondholders – are described in a broad-brush but useful way. Politics more generally in this context, however, are elusive. The author says that, as in the Ionian Islands earlier, the British did not co-opt supporters from a local elite. But surely in neither case is this so. Any expatriate regime that survives over fifty years or longer *has* to co-opt somebody. There were many pro-British Corfiotes in the 1820s and 1830s, though they thinned out over time. The same process was played out in Cyprus later. Indeed, the first key aim of EOKA, the militant Greek-Cypriot organization in the 1950s, was necessarily to intimidate Greeks who did support the *status quo*. The fact that a so-called 'co-opted' Greek cadre under the British has been written out of Cypriot history does not mean that such a thing did not exist, only that events turned against those involved, or made it sensible to do a somersault – as loyalists had done in the Ionian Islands by the late 1850s.

The most striking aspect of Varnava's interpretation of occupation politics in Cyprus after 1878 is that it was the British who encouraged the Hellenization of the Greek intelligentsia, seemingly bewitched by the classical preconceptions of the Empire's ruling caste. As such, expatriate administrators consistently acted to thwart those who defined themselves locally in a distinctively Orthodox and, by implication, genuinely Cypriot way. Thus the British are seen as responsible for laying the foundation of their own later dilemmas in coping with Hellenic nationalism and the 'dream state' of union with Greece. This may or may not be so, though either way one suspects there is an agenda here relating more to present-day issues as seen by the author. It seems likely that the British mistakes in Cyprus – if they may be considered such – were those rather of omission than anything else. Preference for the quiet life came naturally to an alien administration with scarcely more than a hundred British troops and a modest police force of uncertain cohesion to rely upon in a crisis. The assertions made here needed more elaboration and careful dissection, not least in relation to the island's Legislative Council.

The final sections of the book are preoccupied with what sometimes verge on being red herrings. The main example is what is termed 'The Cyprus for Argostoli proposal' (pp. 253–61). This is a problem insofar as there never was such a proposal, at least not one sanctioned by the British Government. It is true, as Varnava fully describes, that both Lloyd George and Churchill latched onto the idea for bartering Cyprus to Greece in order to get an Ionian base from which to prospectively bottle-up Triple Alliance fleets in the Adriatic. But as Varnava himself finally gets around to saying, Lord Grey never bought this idea at all, and it was he who dominated British foreign

policy. This would not matter so much except that there is a frequent tendency in the writing of modern Cypriot history to write of some 'decision' in British diplomacy because of a stray comment or speculation by a minister or politician in London. Varnava's analysis goes on to interpret the Argostoli suggestion as a seamless whole with the undoubted British offer of Cyprus to Greece in October 1915, on condition that Greece went to the aid of stricken Serbia. This proposition is unexceptionable except that the unavailing offer really needs no other explanation than the dire necessities of Balkan strategy for the Entente as the Central Powers bore down on the area. Driven by desperation, Britain offered Cyprus for much the same generic reason that Greece refused it: the island was not worth the candle under wartime conditions. This at least is very much in keeping with the essential thrust of Varnava's book. Meanwhile a more rounded and comprehensive volume on the early years of Britain's occupation of Cyprus still remains to be written.

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James Ker-Lindsay, *The Cyprus Problem. What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. 125.

There is a wealth of publications dealing with the so called Cyprus Problem but this book provides a completely new approach to a complicated subject. Its aim is to provide the reader with an introduction to the various aspects and historical transformations of the Cyprus Problem. In order to do this, the book is divided into five main chapters. These chapters are further subdivided in the form of short answers to the most frequently asked questions about the Cyprus dispute. This unique format within the literature of Cyprus, together with its clear language and well substantiated but easily understandable presentations of the many aspects of the Cyprus Problem, makes the book the perfect introduction for newcomers to the subject. Even for those more familiar with the island and its history, the book provides excellent introductions to many aspects and issues that might still fall outside their knowledge.

If authors come from one of the sides involved in the Cyprus (or any other) dispute, their accounts and judgements are far too often coloured by loyalties and biases towards 'their' side. It is one of the many strengths of this book that Ker-Lindsay, as a British author, provides a balanced and fair account of events, and largely avoids these pitfalls. Only in the first chapter, which gives a very good account of the social and historical background of the island prior to its independence from British colonial rule in 1960, might one have wished for a more critical assessment of the British role in the dispute. After all, London's decision after the Second World War 'never' to leave Cyprus by designating it a strategic military base (and saying so openly in 1954), as well as its ensuing divide-and-rule policy when confronted with a Greek Cypriot internationalisation campaign and a violent struggle for union with Greece in the 1950s, could – and in my view, should – be viewed more critically than it is by the author. Moreover, confronted with the results of condensing a multitude of events and topics into a short space inevitably leads one to feel that there are sub-chapters missing that could be added in a second edition. Among these might be sections on intercommunal violence during the anti-colonial EOKA struggle and – as suggested above – an assessment of whether Britain applied a divide-and-rule policy and of British responsibilities for the escalation of the situation in the 1950s and its consequences.

The next two chapters deal with the years between independence and the Turkish invasion of 1974 and with subsequent attempts to resolve the division of the island. Complex developments, including the role of the United Kingdom, are dealt with admirably, in a fair and balanced way. Some information about the atrocities committed by those involved as well as figures for casualties during the periods of fighting could be added in a future edition, to give the reader a better idea of the extent of the violence and suffering and its legacy of collective trauma and deep mistrust, which has proved so difficult to overcome in the ongoing attempts to resolve the division of the island.

A real highlight is the way in which the most promising and only comprehensive settlement proposal to date, the so called Annan Plan from 2004 is dealt with. The highly controversial proposal was rejected in two simultaneous referenda by the Greek Cypriots and accepted by the Turkish Cypriots. The complex document is well presented and both moderate proponents and opponents of the Plan will find the description and analysis fair and balanced to both sides, a far-from-easy achievement.

The same compliment can be paid to chapter 4, which deals with the key issues currently being negotiated or disputed between the sides involved that need to be addressed in order to solve the Cyprus problem. There is very little one can criticise here with regard to the assessments of the various issues so often presented and distorted in one-sided ways by the protagonists.

Chapter 5 deals broadly with the future of the Cyprus Problem and the role various actors are playing and might play in current and future settlement efforts. In particular where the author speculates about the future, there is inevitably plenty one could disagree with, but one cannot deny that the reader is provided with carefully thought through, sound and plausible assessments of various scenarios and the future of the protracted conflict.

Hard liners on both sides will not like many of the answers Ker-Lindsay gives to many of the questions posed in this book, though their arguments and perceptions are fairly presented. The book clearly supports – in line with the international community and the official positions of all those involved – a solution within the conceptual framework of the negotiations pursued since 1974. Thus it presents possible ‘feasible’ compromises for the highly sensitive and controversial issues as suggested by outside observers and international mediators, and is critical of maximalist or ‘unrealistic’ solutions promoted by hard line elements on both sides, which are not considered feasible by outside mediators. Those who do not share such a perspective will therefore find plenty to disagree with. But irrespective of one’s own position on the Cyprus question, the book provides an excellent introduction to most of the issues one could (and should) want to know about relating to the Cyprus problem.

Books about this island and its little-known and oft-forgotten problem rarely sell well, but this fine paperback edition will, in all probability, become *the* bestselling book about the Cyprus dispute for years to come. And it deserves to.

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Eleni Kallimopoulou, *Paradosiaka: Music, meaning and identity in modern Greece*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., SOAS Musicology Series, 2009. Pp. 246 + 2 CDs.

Students of a wide range of disciplines beyond ethnomusicology will be both enlightened and fascinated by this groundbreaking study of an obscure and complex episode in contemporary Greek culture. None will applaud Eleni Kallimopoulou’s endeavours more gratefully than those who (like this reviewer) ventured unsuspectingly into a ‘*paradosiaka* night’ at *To Baraki tou Vasili*, or another of the small bars scattered round central Athens in the 1990s, and who have been trying to make sense of that experience ever since. It was like entering an inverted parallel-universe to the rumbustious venues of live ‘traditional’ Greek music of the day: *rebetadika*, *dimotikadika*, *ellinadika* and *vareladika* had reached even the furthest diaspora and typically featured raucous audience sing-alongs interspersed with spontaneous bouts of *trapezovasia* (precarious dancing atop laden tables). In stark contrast, *paradosiaka* were performed for solemn gatherings of sober initiates, all resolutely sedentary and intent on close listening; the music was unamplified and played on an assortment of non-tempered instruments normally seen at the opposite end of the Aegean. The vocals, even in *rebetika*, often featured drones recalling Byzantine chant. Drinks were not served during performance – indeed, Kallimopoulou reports a temporary no-alcohol policy at one venue: unsurprisingly it proved ‘irreconcilable with how an average Greek defines entertainment’ (p.79), but the experiment is eloquent testimony to the eccentricity of the ‘actors’ of *paradosiaka*. This cast comprised ‘various bizarre individuals’ in one insider’s estimation, a description largely borne out by Kallimopoulou’s account of the contributions of their successive generations to the process of indigenization, professionalization and institutionalization of *paradosiaka* over the last four decades.

The initial *paradosiaka* vogue was a spin-off from the *rebetika* revival (and more particularly its Smyrnaic subset), and Kallimopoulou’s exploration of the *Zeitgeist* of post-dictatorship Greece duly rehearses the oft-attested identity crisis on the eve of Greek accession to the EEC and the ensuing search for cultural bedrock in folk tradition, which was stymied by the association of Hellenic folksongs (*dimotika*) with images of the Junta’s torturers (in black sunglasses) dancing heroically on Greek national days. In contrast, the traditional music of the lost homelands of Asia Minor held the double allure of being substantially urban, yet non-Western, and of having earned the Junta’s disfavour in its *rebetika* and *smyrneika* manifestations as Turcophile and unpatriotic. The rekindled popularity of Ottoman musical retro presaged a period of political

rapprochement with Turkey, which escalated via 'earthquake diplomacy' to culminate in the famous *pas de deux* danced by foreign-ministers Papandreou and Cem to the strains of a transcultural *zeybekiko*. The articulation of politics through music becomes a *Leitmotiv* of Kallimopoulou's book. Thus the pioneers of *paradosiaka* included a band named *Dynameis tou Aigaïou*, as if a strike-force deployed in a contested geocultural zone. Another group called '*Bosphorus*' comprised Turkish master-musicians of Ottoman classical music, but was marketed as 'a lost piece of Greek tradition'. Challenging such chauvinist appropriations was the multi-national group *Labyrinthos*, established by the Anglo-Irish expatriate Ross Daly, a 'tall, other-worldly figure' with a matching vision of the transcendental power of modal music, that 'pre-modern cultural *koine*' of the East. The Greek State was to be another significant player through the National Music Schools, established in the 1990s, which implicated *paradosiaka* and their exponents in the official representation of Greek national music – albeit somewhat chaotically, because teaching practice was often at odds with the programmatic aims of the courses.

It is indeed no small irony that the term '*paradosiaka*' ('traditional'), with its connotations of robust and uncontrived indigenism, should come to denote a boutique confection, 'rooted in Athens' and its youth culture. Nor that in some of its manifestations, '*paradosiaka*' was, in effect, a euphemism – or arguably a misnomer – for 'Turkish'. Thus, 'the source culture' for this music and its practice are repeatedly referred to as Turkish (pp.165 f.), and the systematic exploration of the traditions of Turkey is seen as central to *paradosiaka* musicianship. Indeed, its Thessalonian exponents are reported to disparage the repertoire of their Athenian rivals as merely '*ethnik*', because 'sadly, they do not love Turkish music' (p.171). This is a remarkable contortion, even for a weasel word like *paradosi*, and bespeaks an advanced state of flux in concepts of Greek tradition and identity.

Kallimopoulou relates the intriguing tale of how an array of distinctively 'eastern' instruments (*ud*, *kanun*, *saz*, *kemençe*, *ney*, *tanbur*) migrated physically from 'our East' (now Turkey) to form the constitutive hinge of the whole *paradosiaka* phenomenon in Greece. Their importation and promotion in the guise of reclaimed Hellenic patrimony was masterminded by a group of Greek nationalists with neo-Orthodox connections, ominously styled 'the chanting milieu'. This was directed by the redoubtable pedagogue and radio-orchestra leader, Simon Karas, who seems to have been pursuing a musical version of the irredentist *Megali Idea* long after the demise of the political project. When he needed non-tempered instruments to demonstrate visually the intervallic relationships of the Byzantine *echoi*, he (re-)appropriated them from beyond the Aegean. Kallimopoulou deconstructs the 'acrobatic formulation' (p.39) whereby 'the chanting milieu' justified their raiding of the neighbouring 'farmhouse where the seeds of Greek music have been planted and preserved', by way of retrieving 'what's "ours"'. She notes that the claims for Byzantine and ancient Greek origins of some 'eastern' instruments were not entirely without foundation, but the line of their transmission, even from refugee musicians of 1922, was effectively broken by the time of their appropriation.

Karas's apostles were less circumspect and duly secured the adoption of the Turkish *saz*, 're-baptised' *tambouras*, as the core reference-instrument for the folk music programme of Greek State Music Schools. Despite some cosmetic changes (extra frets and a relocated sound-hole), Kallimopoulou insists that this instrument was 'in reality none other than a Turkish *saz*, constructed in Turkey and imported to Athens' in the substantial quantities required by the Greek education system, 'to occupy a special place as icons of the [Greek] state and of the bourgeois elite's project to delineate a national culture' (p.48). She unsentimentally exposes the serial exploitation of ambiguities, half-truths and slippery signifiers in the promotion and reception of *paradosiaka*, and this will not endear her book to the custodians of the legacy of 'the chanters'. Nor will her ready espousal of the view that the category *Smyrneika* ('Smyrnaic song') is a Greek nationalist myth, an irredentist ploy to nationalize Ottoman culture; likewise the Greek tendency to lionize the so-called '*Romioi*' composers of Ottoman music. She criticizes such attempts to monopolize 'the culturally composite reality of Ottoman life' as products of ideology, not scholarship. Again, drawing on participant observation, she documents the consternation of younger *paradosiaka* musicians at being unwillingly coopted into divisive ethnocentric representations. Her own concern is to make sense of the plurality of meanings articulated through *paradosiaka* by different 'actors'. Accordingly she also engages at arm's length with Ross Daly's insistence on the primordial spirituality inherent in modal musics and unpacks the elements of his music and performance which only conventionally connote transcendence and trance.

Kallimopoulou's painstaking work is occasionally vitiated by lapses in the copy-editing: *inter alia*, 'confounded' is confused with 'confined' (p.18), 'sang' with 'sung' (p.20), 'accredited for' with 'credited with' (p. 182) and there are several instances of transferred Greek syntax ('interested for', 'difference with'). The transliteration strategy was also ill-advised: *rempétiko* jarred

as much on p.244 as it did on p.2, as did *Ntéfi*, *Staúros*, *kathareúousa*, *zeïmpékiko* and *rempetomanía*. But the book is well produced overall, and the text is usefully complemented by photographs and two CDs documenting the detailed musicological analysis.

As a professional exponent of *paradosiaka*, Kallimopoulou is alert to the role of the marketplace in shaping the practices, dilemmas and career strategies of musicians. Her case studies introduce the technically prodigious generation that emerged in the mid-1980s to indigenize the playing idiom of the instruments more fully, and the current 'mp3 and internet generation' that has opened up to music from all over the world, even the West. She does not shrink from discussing the intractable problems of *paradosiaka* musicianship in Greece: as a marginal, instrument-centred 'style' (or 'genre', by the end of the book), deprived of the sustaining context of a specific, local tradition, it struggles to maintain standards of performance and teaching. The epilogue contains some rather glum soul-searching, headlined with the oxymoron '*Paradosiaka* Futures'. A somewhat demoralised crop of current practitioners displays not just syncretic, but inauspiciously centrifugal tendencies and no overriding sense of loyalty to any tradition – belying the name *paradosiaka*.

'*Paradoxa*' might have been a more apposite title for the style/genre and for Kallimopoulou's brave account of its trajectory.

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Biography as allegory

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Through comparison with Dante's Divine Comedy and with Late Antique allegorical interpretations of the Bible this article makes the case that Byzantine hagiographers encoded an allegorical dimension into their texts and that they did so in order to make value judgements that complement explicit evaluations of the behaviour of saints.

When in the early fourteenth century the Florentine exile Dante Alighieri wrote his *Divine Comedy* he started with a description of the situation in which he found himself before he embarked on the journey that would take him through hell, purgatory and heaven.

*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,
Ché la diritta via era smarrita.*¹

Upon the journey of our life midway
I came unto myself in a dark wood,
For from the straight path I had gone astray.²

These opening lines set the scene for an elaborate narrative: Dante tells his audience how he spent the night wandering in this wood until at daybreak he arrived 'at the foot of a hill' (*al piè d'un colle*),³ how after a brief rest he tried to climb this hill but was driven back by a leopard, a lion, and a she-wolf,⁴ and how he finally met the Roman poet Virgil who told him that he could not ascend to the top of the 'delectable mountain' (*il diletto monte*) but needed to take a different route.⁵

Although Dante gives the impression that he is recounting a real event, there can be no doubt that he never actually left a highway, got lost in a wood and tried to climb a mountain. Yet this does not mean that he is telling a lie: Dante did experience a crisis

1 Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy*, Inferno I.1–3, ed. T. Di Salvo, *La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri* (Milan 1987) 6–7.

2 *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, tr. J. Butler Fletcher (New York 1931) 3.

3 Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Inferno, I.4–27 ed. Di Salvo, 7–8.

4 Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Inferno, I.28–60, ed. Di Salvo, 9–11.

5 Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Inferno, I.61–136 ed. Di Salvo, 11–16.

at some point of his life and it is this crisis that is reflected in the narrative.⁶ The text can convey this meaning because each of the features that I have mentioned has a metaphorical dimension and because taken together they add up to an account of the successive stages of Dante's troubles.

A closer look reveals that Dante does not leave his audience without indicators that he wishes his story to be understood in this way: in the very first line he employs the phrase 'journey of our life' (*cammin di nostra vita*) where the qualification 'of our life' leaves no doubt that 'journey' does not have a literal but a metaphorical meaning. In this way he signals to his audience that the following phrase 'straight road' (*diritta via*) where such qualification is missing should equally be regarded as a metaphor and that the other motifs such as night and mountain should then also be understood in the same way. It is evident that such a strategy could only be successful because Dante's audience was used to reading texts in this manner for otherwise they would have failed to take the hint. Moreover, Dante could be confident that they would decode the narrative correctly because he knew that they were familiar with the connotations of the different motifs.

The notion that narratives can have metaphorical dimensions did not first arise in the Middle Ages. Known as allegory, literally 'speaking otherwise', it had first been conceived in Antiquity by Homeric scholars,⁷ and had later been adapted by Christian authors who used it as a method to gain a deeper insight into the biblical text.⁸ A typical example of this approach is the *Life of Moses* by the fourth-century author Gregory of Nyssa.⁹ This text consists of two parts, firstly a historical account based on information gleaned from the Old Testament, and secondly an allegorical interpretation of this data. Accordingly, each event is mentioned twice. For example, Gregory states in the first part that when God manifested himself on Mt Sinai the Israelites went down to the foot of the mountain whereas Moses stayed behind, which is a paraphrase of Exodus 19:10–24,¹⁰ and then explains in the second part that Moses ascended 'to the mountain of the knowledge of God' (τῷ τῆς θεογνωσίας ὄρει),¹¹ and that 'the knowledge of God is a steep and almost inaccessible mountain of which the common people scarcely reach the base' (ὄρος γὰρ ἐστὶν ἄναντες καὶ δυσπρόσιτον ἡ θεολογία ἣς μόλις λεῶς τῆς ὑπαρξείας φθάνει).¹²

6 Of course, one needs to be careful not to conceive of this crisis in 'psychological' terms. Dante's account is not so much concerned with a personal crisis as it is with the sinfulness that comes from man's fallen condition and that affects not only Dante but human beings in general: cf. the commentary in Di Salvo, *La Divina Commedia*, 6.

7 Cf. R. Lamberton, *Homer the Theologian: Neoplatonist Allegorical Reading and the Growth of the Epic Tradition* [Transformation of the Classical Heritage] (Los Angeles 1986).

8 Cf. e.g. R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (London 1959).

9 Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Moysis*, ed. H. Musurillo [Gregorii Nysseni Opera VII.1] (Leiden 1991) 1–142.

10 Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Moysis*, I.45, ed. Musurillo, 20.1–13.

11 Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Moysis*, II.152, ed. Musurillo, 80.8.

12 Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vita Moysis*, II.158, ed. Musurillo, 82.1–2.

This approach to the Biblical text was bequeathed by Late Antiquity not only to Western Christianity but also to the Byzantine world. Given this shared legacy one can formulate the hypothesis that the Byzantines not only looked for an allegorical dimension in already existing texts but also encoded such a dimension into newly constructed narratives. It is true that Byzantine civilisation never gave rise to a Christian epic that could be compared with Dante's *Divine Comedy* but it did produce many narratives of a religious character in the form of *saints' lives* and *encomia* and it is on these texts that I will focus in the following.

Were Byzantine hagiographical texts meant to be read as allegories? This question is answered less easily than one might first think. Like Dante, Byzantine hagiographers refer to mountains, paths, forests and the like but this, of course, does not yet prove that the narratives in which these features are found had a metaphorical dimension. Indeed, a metaphorical reading seems to be ruled out because unlike Dante's *Divine Comedy* hagiographical texts give every impression of relating real events. In what follows I will attempt to demonstrate that it is nevertheless possible to detect the presence of an allegorical layer in Middle Byzantine *saints' lives*. In order to make my case I will focus on clusters of terms and phrases that are used in their literal sense but that are commonly employed as metaphors; and I will pay particular attention to passages where literal and figurative use of the same words appears side by side or at least in the same text.

Given the pervasive use of metaphorical language in Late Antique and Byzantine writings it comes as no surprise that such language is also found in the *Lives* of saints. Highly educated hagiographers such as Theodoret of Cyrus did not confine themselves to merely presenting facts but embellished their accounts with sometimes elaborate imagery. A typical example can be found in the biography of the Syrian ascetic Baradatus, which forms part of Theodoret's *Religious History*:

ἐν αὐτῷ δὲ ὦν τῷ ὕψει τῆς ἀρετῆς οὐκ ἔᾶ συναναβῆναι τὸ φρόνημα, ἀλλὰ κάτω ἔρπειν κελεύει περὶ αὐτὰ τοῦ ὄρους τὰ κράσπεδα· οἶδε γὰρ ὅσῃν ἔλκει βλάβην φλεγμαίνουσα τῷ τύφῳ διάνοια.¹³

Being in this very height of virtue he did not let his attitude ascend with him, but ordered it to crawl below around the very fringes of the mountain, for he knew what great harm is caused by a mind that is swollen with pride.

Here Theodoret makes the point that the saint had reached spiritual perfection by likening this state to the summit of a mountain; and he gives this image a further connotation by equating the saint's humility with the foothills of this mountain, a detail that undoubtedly suggested itself to him because the adjective *ταπεινός* does not only mean 'humble'

13 Theodoret of Cyrus, *L'histoire des moines de Syrie: 'Histoire Philothée'*, ed. P. Canivet and A. Leroy-Molinghen, 2 vols [*Sources chrétiennes* 234, 257] (Paris 1977–79) II, 222.4–7.

but also has the literal sense of ‘low’ and is in this sense often used in conjunction with the noun φρόνημα, which appears in the text.¹⁴

In Theodoret’s biography of Baradatus this elaborate image appears in the concluding section and is clearly distinguished from the preceding account of the life and achievements of this saint. However, not all authors kept the literal and metaphorical dimensions apart in their writings, as can be seen from a letter that the eleventh-century polymath Michael Psellos sent to his friend John Xiphilinos. There Psellos criticises Xiphilinos’ rejection of Platonic philosophy in favour of Christian contemplation in the following manner:

μη μέγα οἴου τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ ὄρους ἀναστροφὴν, μηδὲ τρυφᾶς ἐπὶ τῷ τῶν λόγων κατα-
 τρυφᾶν· ἀλλ’ εἴ ποὺ τις πεδιάς ἢ βαθυτάτη κοιλάς, ἢ φάραγξ διερρωγυῖα ἢ μυχὸς
 γῆς ἄρρητος καὶ ἀπόρρητος, ἐκεῖσε καταβάς ἐνδομύχησον, πᾶσιν μὲν ἐγκύπτων βιβ-
 λίοις ἡμετέροις τε καὶ τοῖς θύραθεν, καὶ τοῖς συλλογισμοῖς γυμνασθεὶς τὰ πρῶτα,
 οὕτως ἐπὶ τὰς ἀσυλλογίστους γνώσεις ἀνάβηθι· πᾶσα γὰρ ἀρετὴ, μεθ’ ὑπερηφανίας,
 ἀδελφὲ φίλτατε, καὶ οἰήσεως, ἐσχάτη κακία καθέστηκε.¹⁵

Do not consider the sojourn on the mountain to be a great thing, and do not revel in revelling against the speeches; but if there is anywhere a plain or a very deep hollow or a cleft ravine or an ineffable and secret hole of the earth, climb down there and hide in it, studying all our books and those of the pagans, and when you have first been trained in syllogisms, thus climb up to the types of knowledge that cannot be attained through syllogistic reasoning! For, most beloved friend, all virtue that is coupled with pride and arrogance is the worst evil.

In this passage Psellos reminds his addressee that it is impossible to achieve visions of God unless one has before engaged in philosophy and then advises him to go back to first principles. This point is made through use of the same metaphorical language that Theodoret had employed half a millennium earlier. Indeed, Xiphilinos is the negative counterpart to Baradatus: with his pride he has reached the summit whereas regarding his spiritual status he is still dwelling at the bottom. However, in this case a literal dimension is added because ‘the mountain’ mentioned by Psellos not only signifies Xiphilinos’ inner qualities but also refers to Mt Olympus in Bithynia where Xiphilinos lived as a monk. Psellos exploits this fact to great effect when he asks his addressee to ‘climb down’ not only from his prideful attitude but also from the real mountain where he had his cell and to dwell in a low-lying place, such as a ravine or a cave, that corresponds to his spiritual status.

This raises the question: might Byzantine hagiographers not also have played with the literal and metaphorical dimensions? In order to find an answer I will turn to an episode in the eleventh-century *Life* of Lazarus of Galesion, a Byzantine holy man who

14 For ταπεινὸν φρόνημα and ταπεινοφροσύνη, cf. e.g. Ὅσιος Λουκάς. Ὁ βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Λουκά τοῦ Στεριώτη, ed. D. Z. Sophianos (Athens 1989) 177: διὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης ὑπερβολήν.

15 Michael Psellos, *Epistola a Giovanni Xiphilino*, ed. U. Criscuolo [*Hellenica et byzantina neapolitana* 14.] (2nd ed., Naples 1990) 53.85–92.

became the highly successful abbot of a group of monasteries in Western Asia Minor.¹⁶ Before he rose to such prominence Lazarus had led a rather unsettled existence. His hagiographer Gregory tells us that he left his home village when he was still a boy and that he then drifted through Asia Minor where he visited famous religious shrines.¹⁷ Such a way of life was not without its dangers: we are told that during his travels Lazarus met a monk who promised to take him to Jerusalem but in reality intended to sell him into slavery. When the saint was apprised of this plan he is said to have reacted in the following manner:

εὐθέως ὡς εἶχε φυγὰς ὄχετο καὶ τῆς εὐθείας ἐκκλίνας πρὸς τὸ παρακείμενον πλησίον ὄρος ἀνελθεῖν ἔσπευδεν· ἔτι δὲ παρὰ τοὺς πρόποδας τοῦ ὄρους ὄντα ἢ νύξ τοῦτον καταλαμβάνει· ὀρξάμενος δὲ τοῦ ἀνέρχεσθαι διὰ τε τὸ σκότος τῆς νυκτὸς διὰ τε τὸ λίαν τοῦ ὄρους ἄναντες ἐποίησεν ὡς ἔλεγεν ὅλην τὴν νύκτα χερσὶ καὶ ποσὶ πυκτεύων καὶ μόλις ἦδη τῆς ἡμέρας ὑπανυαζούσης ἠδυνήθη ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ ἀνελθεῖν.¹⁸

He immediately without further ado fled and, having turned away from the straight (sc. road) to the nearby mountain, he hurried to climb it. And while he was still in the foothills night overtook him, and having begun to climb up he spent, as he said, the whole night struggling with hands and feet because of the darkness of the night and the extreme steepness of the mountain. And barely when the day was already breaking did he manage to climb over it.

This passage presents us with a much more elaborate scenario than the examples that we have discussed so far. Apart from references to a high and inaccessible mountain and its foothills, which have counterparts in Gregory of Nyssa and Theodoret of Cyrus, it contains two further motifs: deviation from a straight road, and nightfall at an inopportune time. These motifs are already familiar to us from the beginning of the *Divine Comedy* where they were given an allegorical meaning. Is this also the case in the *Life* of Lazarus? Here one could again raise several objections. Firstly, Lazarus' hagiographer purports to relate a 'real' event on the basis of information that was volunteered by the saint himself. Secondly, this event takes place in a specific geographical context, the area north of the city of Attalia in southern Asia Minor, which is indeed mountainous and thus could well have been the setting for the event described in the *Life*. And thirdly, the deviation from the road can be explained as a consequence of the situation Lazarus finds himself in: as we have seen he is on the run from his would-be slaver and would obviously have been in much greater danger of being captured if he had stayed on the road.

16 Gregorius Monachus, *Vita S. Lazari*, ed. H. Delehaye, *Acta Sanctorum Novembris* III (Brussels 1910) 508–88. On Lazarus cf. e.g. J. Thomas, 'Documentary evidence from the Byzantine monastic *typika* for the history of the Evergetine Reform Movement', in M. Mullett and A. Kirby (ed.), *The Theotokos Evergetis and eleventh-century monasticism* [Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations 6.1] (Belfast 1994) 246–73, esp. 249–51.

17 Cf. C. Foss, 'Pilgrimage in medieval Asia Minor', *DOP* 56 (2002) 129–51, esp. 147.

18 *Life of Lazarus of Galesion* 9, ed. Delehaye, 511F12–512A5.

However, these objections can be overcome when we consider the context in which this passage appears. Before he describes the incident which we have been discussing so far, the hagiographer gives an account of Lazarus' travels in the company of the monk, which contains the following passage:

ὁ δὲ μοναχὸς σκολιὸς ὢν, καὶ μὴ βουλόμενος ὀρθῶς πορεύεσθαι μᾶλλον δὲ μὴ δυνάμενος διὰ τὸ πονηρὸν ἔθος ὃ εἶχεν, ἐκκλίνων τῆς εὐθείας διήρχετο κυκλεύων τὰς κόμας, ἐπαιτῶν καὶ συλλέγων ἄρτα καὶ ἄλλο εἴ τι παρῆρχον αὐτῷ.¹⁹

And the monk who was crooked, and who did not want to travel in a straight line or rather could not do so because of the evil habit that he had, turned away from the straight (sc. road) and circling traversed the villages, begging and collecting bread and whatever else they gave him.

It is evident that this passage has one feature in common with the following account of Lazarus' flight: like Lazarus, the vagrant monk deviates from the road on which he is travelling. As before, this behaviour can be explained through practical considerations: the monk leaves the highway because the villages where he begs are situated at some distance from it. However, in this case the statement that the monk 'strays from the straight road' is complemented by a reference to his character where 'not travelling in a straight line', here with the additional qualification 'crooked', clearly belongs to the metaphorical level. This characterisation, which is based on Proverbs 14:2: 'he who travels in a straight line fears the Lord whereas he who is crooked on his roads will be dishonoured' (ὁ πορευόμενος ὀρθῶς φοβεῖται τὸν κύριον· ὁ δὲ σκολιάζων ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ ἀτιμασθήσεται), is closely related to the life-style of the monk. The participle κυκλεύων, which literally means 'going round in a circle', points to the noun κυκλευτής or 'circler', a common term for vagrant monks whose manner of life was frowned upon in eleventh-century Byzantium.²⁰ Thus we can not only conclude that 'deviation from the straight road' has an allegorical dimension just as it does in Dante's account but also that it has the same – negative – meaning.

Given the fact that the two passages appear in close vicinity and that in both cases we find exactly the same phrase, ἐκκλίνειν τῆς εὐθείας, it seems inconceivable that Lazarus' straying from the road does not also have an allegorical dimension. This raises the question: does his behaviour also have a negative connotation and if so what does the criticism consist of? The answer is provided in the passage that immediately follows Lazarus' exertions in the mountains:

ὥς δὲ ὑπερανέβη τὸ ὄρος ὁδὸν τινα τετραμμένην εὐρὼν ἐπορεύετο· οὕτως δὲ αὐτῷ μόνῳ περιπατοῦντι συναντᾷ αὐτῷ τις μοναχὸς γηραιὸς ὃς στὰς καὶ ἐπερωτήσας

19 *Life of Lazarus of Galesion* 8, ed. Delehaye, 511D5–10.

20 Cf. E. Herman, 'La *stabilitas loci* nel monarchismo bizantino', *OCP* 21 (1955) 115–42, with references to canonical prohibitions of such a life-style. On attitudes towards non-coenobitic monasticism in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, cf. P. Magdalino, 'The Byzantine holy man in the twelfth century', in S. Hackel (ed.) *The Byzantine Saint* [Studies supplementary to Sobornost 5] (London 1981) 51–66.

αὐτὸν καὶ μαθὼν πάντα τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ ἀπεῖργεν αὐτὸν τῆς πρὸς τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα ὁδοῦ διὰ τὸ νέον τῆς ἡλικίας· συνεβούλευε δὲ αὐτῷ τοῖς ἐκείνου λόγοις μᾶλλον εἶξαι καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ μονὴν ἀπελθεῖν - ἦν γὰρ τινος μικροῦς ποιμένης ὁ γέρον προεστώς - κάκεῖσε προσκαρτερεῖσαι ἕως οὗ τὸ ἄφοβον ἐκ τῆς ἡλικίας αὐτῷ προσγένηται.

When he had climbed over the mountain he found a beaten track and travelled on it. And while he was thus wandering alone he met an old monk who stopped and asked him and when he had been apprised of his whole background prevented him from pursuing the road to Jerusalem because of his youthful age. And he advised him rather to yield to his words and to go with him to his monastery – for the elder was the superior of a small flock – and to remain there until he would be old enough not to have to fear for himself.

As before, the narrative seems straightforward: once he has got over the mountain Lazarus meets an abbot whose community he then enters. Again, however, this does not exclude the presence of an allegorical dimension. Indeed, when we compare the passage with Dante's narrative we can see that the abbot is given a role that is similar to that of Virgil. Fortunately for us, the passage can be easily decoded. The salient feature is that the meeting takes place on another road, which is called the 'beaten track' (τετριμμένη ὁδός). In hagiographical literature this expression is often used in a metaphorical sense: in the sixth-century *Life* of Patriarch Eutychius by Eustratius the Priest, for example, we read that this saint's 'feet were in all respects straight and firmly planted, and did not deviate to the right or to the left but walked the beaten and royal road' (τοὺς κατὰ πάντα ὀρθοὺς καὶ ἐδραίους πόδας μὴ ἐκκλίνοντας δεξιὰ ἢ ἀριστερά, βαδίζοντας δὲ τὴν τετριμμένην καὶ βασιλικὴν ὁδόν).²¹ Such statements have a Biblical basis in Proverbs 4:27: 'do not stray to the right or to the left' (μὴ ἐκκλίνης εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ μηδὲ εἰς τὰ ἀριστερά), and Numeri 20:17: 'we will go by the royal road and will not stray to the right or the left' (ὁδῷ βασιλικῇ πορευσόμεθα, οὐκ ἐκκλινοῦμεν δεξιὰ οὐδὲ εὐώνυμα). However, the conceptual framework that they express is adopted from Greek philosophy: it is the Aristotelian definition of virtue as the happy 'medium' (μεσότης) between two equally negative extremes, 'shortcoming' (ἐλλειψις) and 'excess' (ὑπερβολή).²² This notion was frequently appealed to in discussions about what constitutes proper monasticism and was usually linked to the coenobitic régime, which was presented as a life of moderate asceticism that avoided both laxity and excessive rigour.²³

21 Eustratius Presbyter, *Vita Eutychii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani*, ed. C. Laga [Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca 25] (Turnhout 1992) 72.2232–5.

22 A. Lumpe, 'Königsweg', *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 16 (2006) 216–22, esp. 219, with references to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (1103b26 and 1108b10).

23 Cf. Lumpe, 'Königsweg', 22–221, with references to Basil of Caesarea, John Cassian, John Climacus and Jerome, cf. also 221–2, on the use of the same framework in the dogmatic discourse. For a more detailed discussion cf. F. Taillez, 'βασιλικὴ ὁδός. Les valeurs d'un terme mystique et le prix de son histoire littéraire', *OCP* 13 (1947) 299–354.

A typical expression of this ideology can be found in the *Life* of Cyril of Philea where Proverbs 4:27 is conflated with Numeri 20:17 and is then interpreted as follows:

μη ἐκκλίνης εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ μηδὲ εἰς τὰ ἀριστερά, ἀλλ' ὁδῷ βασιλικῇ πορεύου· ἡ γὰρ μετὰ λόγου εὐδιάκριτος ἔνδεια καὶ στενότης, βασιλικὴ ἐστὶν ὁδός· ὥστε ὁ ἀδιάκριτος ὑπωπιασμός ἢ ἄλογος συγκατάβασις ἀσύμφορά εἰσιν ὡς ἐκατέρωθεν παρὰ λόγον γινόμενα.²⁴

Do not stray to the right or to the left but go by the royal road for well-discerning and reasonable indigence and straightened conditions is a royal road. Accordingly undiscerning self-imposed hardships and unreasonable concessions [to the body] are unprofitable because they happen against reason on either side [of the royal road].

This passage, which is itself a quotation from an earlier text,²⁵ links the golden mean to the use of 'discretion' (διάκρισις) and 'reason' (λόγος), which determine what is suitable for human beings in general and for the specific needs of individuals.²⁶

There can be no doubt that the narrative in the *Life* of Lazarus is meant to be understood in this way. The coenobitic life-style is represented by the abbot who as we have seen happens to stand on a 'beaten track'. And since the 'straight road' has the same connotations as the 'beaten track' one can argue that the vagrant monk and the young Lazarus both deviate from such a life-style but that they do so in opposite directions: the former is too lax and is therefore simply going round in circles whereas the latter is too fervent in his desire to ascend the 'mountain' of spiritual perfection.²⁷ That this behaviour may be linked to asceticism is suggested through the portrayal of the vagrant as a glutton and through the characterisation of Lazarus' struggles as πυκτεύειν, which literally means 'boxing' and refers to athletic contests but which was commonly used by Christian authors as a metaphor for ascetic endeavour.²⁸

If we accept this interpretation we must consider the possibility that the other features in the account of Lazarus' flight also have allegorical meanings even if they are not made explicit, just as it is the case in the *Divine Comedy*. The hagiographer mentions two reasons why the ascent is so difficult, 'the exceeding steepness of the mountain' (τὸ λίαν τοῦ ὄρους ἄναντες), and 'the darkness of the night' (τὸ σκότος τῆς νυκτός). We have

24 Nicholas Kataskepenos, *La vie de saint Cyrille le Philéote, moine Byzantin* († 1110), ed. É. Sargologos [Subsidia Hagiographica 39] (Brussels 1964) 86.

25 *Climax, Scholion ad gradum* 26.2, MPG 88, col. 1093A7–10.

26 There is a vast literature on the topic of discretion. Cf. e.g. E. Scholl, 'The Mother of Virtues: *Discretio*', *Cistercian Studies Quarterly* 36 (2001) 389–401.

27 Cf. e.g. the criticism of 'unambitious' monks in Nicetas Stethatos, *Physicorum Capitum Centuria* II.83, MPG 120, col. 940D2–4: ὁ ἀεὶ περὶ τὸ αὐτὸ στρεφόμενος καὶ μὴ πορρωτέρω κινηθῆναι βουλούμενος ἡμιόνῳ τῷ περὶ τὴν μηχανὴν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κινουμένῳ ἔοικεν.

28 Cf. e.g. Evagrius Ponticus, *Tractatus ad Eulogium* 14, MPG 79, col. 1109D15: ὁ δὲ τὰ προσπεσόντα πάθῃ πυκτεύων ἐκκόψαι. This use of terms referring to athletic contests was, of course, inspired by the Apostle Paul who often uses them in his Letters, cf. e.g. I Corinthians 9:26: οὕτως πυκτεύω ὡς οὐκ ἄερα δέξων.

already come across the motif of the steep mountain in Gregory of Nyssa's allegorical interpretation of Mt Sinai. In itself it is, of course, not negative: it only becomes so if one is not ready for the task as is the case with Lazarus who overestimates his abilities.²⁹ I would suggest that this aspect of the story is alluded to in the reference to the dark night, which falls when Lazarus starts his climb and only lifts when he reaches the top. This detail has a counterpart in the *Divine Comedy* where Dante is also overtaken by darkness and there it has an evident negative connotation since it is closely linked to his going astray. In order to establish whether a similar reading is possible for the *Life* of Lazarus we need to turn to Greek texts where the metaphorical dimension is made explicit. An obvious starting point is Proverbs 2:13, a criticism of those 'who leave the straight ways, to walk in the ways of darkness' (οἱ ἐγκαταλιπόντες ὁδοὺς εὐθείας τοῦ πορευθῆναι ἐν ὁδοῖς σκότους). This passage was often quoted in Byzantine spiritual literature where it was conflated with Proverbs 4:27.³⁰ As a rule 'darkness' is there equated with 'lack of discretion' (ἀδιακρισία) just as 'discretion' (διάκρισις) is routinely linked to 'light' (φῶς).³¹ This takes us back to the 'golden mean': we have already seen in the passage from the *Life* of Cyril of Philea that extreme asceticism is linked to a 'lack of discretion'. It is likely that these are not the only features in the passage that have an allegorical meaning.³² However, the aim of this article is not to undertake an exhaustive analysis but rather to demonstrate that Byzantine saints' Lives can be read as allegories. Therefore I will instead turn to another text, the *Life* of Cyril of Philea, in order to show that the

29 Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Moses*, II.161, ed. Musurillo, 83–4.4–10, where Gregory says that those who try to climb the mountain 'unwashed' (ἄπλυντοι, i.e., without proper preparation, and through 'irrational sense perception' (τὴν ἄλογον αἴσθησιν), will be stoned and shot. Gregory infers this from Exodus 19:12–14 where God warns that beasts will be stoned if they approach Mt Sinai and has Moses tell the Israelites to wash their clothes.

30 Cf. e.g. Pseudo-Ephraem, *Sermones paraeneticī ad monachos Aegypti* 40, ed. K.G. Phrantzoles, *Hosiou Ephraim tou Syrou erga* III (Salonica 1990) 164–5.1–12.

31 Cf. e.g. Pseudo-Athanasius, *Epistula II ad Castorem* 4, MPG 28, col. 888D6–7: τοὺς σωτηριώδεις ἀκτῖνας τῆς διακρίσεως, and 896C4–5: τοῦ γὰρ πνεύματος τῆς ὁργῆς σκοτίσαντος τὴν διάνοιαν οὕτε διακρίσεως φῶς ... ἐν ἡμῖν εὐρεθῆσεται.

32 Here I will only mention the detail that Lazarus is struggling 'with his hands and feet' (χερσὶ καὶ ποσὶ). This information again seems straightforward: when one climbs a steep hill it is safest to go down on all fours as it affords one a better grip. However, again this does not exclude the presence of further connotations. Readers are reminded that for human beings such behaviour is anomalous – they usually only use their feet to move from one place to another – whereas it is the usual way of movement for animals. This observation, however, points to the framework of the 'golden mean'. In the quotation from the *Life* of Cyril of Philea want and excess are both explained as the result of a 'lack of discretion' (ἀδιακρισία), which is in turn caused by 'lack of reason' (ἀλογία). This state of affairs, however, reduces human beings to the state of animals since 'reason' was considered to be the quality that distinguished human beings from beasts. Therefore one could argue that the hagiographer added this feature in order to liken Lazarus to quadrupeds, which are often referred to as 'irrational beasts' (ἄλογα ζῷα). This is all the more likely as references to animals in Scripture are often interpreted as statements about the irrational parts of the soul, which human beings have in common with animals, cf. above note 28.

author of the *Life* of Lazarus was not alone in encoding a metaphorical dimension into his narrative.

Cyril of Philea was a twelfth-century solitary in Byzantine Thrace who had a large following, including members of the ruling family and important religious figures such as the monk Nicholas Kataskepenos, who later became his hagiographer.³³ As is customary for a hagiographer Nicholas presents his audience with an account of Cyril's life from his birth until his old age when the following mishap befell the saint:

ἐν δὲ τῷ ἐνενηκοστῷ αὐτοῦ πέμπτῳ ἔτει τῆς ἡλικίας ἣν σὺν τῷ γήρει καὶ τῷ σώματι μικρὸν νοσηλευόμενος· ἐξελθὼν οὖν ἐν ἀσελήνῳ νυκτὶ τῆς κέλλης τοῦ χύσαι τὸ ὕδωρ αὐτοῦ - ἀπεῖχε δὲ ὁ τόπος ἐκ τῆς κέλλης ὥσει λίθου βολήν - ἐν τῷ ὑποστρέφειν ὠδήγει ἑαυτὸν μετὰ τῆς ῥάβδου καὶ εὗρισκεν ἐν τῷ δεξιῷ μέρει τῆς τρίβου ἀκάνθας χονδράς, αἷς κατακολουθῶν ἀπώλεσε τὴν κέλλαν· καὶ πολλὰ κοπιήσας οὐκ ἠδυνήθη εὗρεῖν αὐτήν. τέλος δὲ ἐξακολουθῶν ταῖς ἀκάνθαις ἀνέβη εἰς τὴν κορυφὴν τοῦ ἀμπελω- νος καὶ εὗρων τὸν φραγμὸν αὐτοῦ ἐξεπλάγη· ἐξατονήσας δὲ καὶ μὴ δυνάμενός τι διαπράξασθαι προσερχύη ἐπ' αὐτῷ· καὶ ἴστατο ἕως οὗ ἔκρουσε τὸ ξύλον τῆς μονῆς· κατ' οἰκονομίαν δὲ θεοῦ ἀπῆλθεν ὁ μαθητὴς αὐτοῦ καὶ μὴ εὗρων αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ κέλλῃ ἐκάλεσε τοὺς ἀδελφούς· καὶ λαβόντες φῶτα μόλις ποτὲ εὔρον αὐτόν ἰστάμενον ἐν τῷ φραγμῷ καὶ ἐπιστηριζόμενον τῇ ῥάβδῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ μὴ δυνάμενον ὅλως φθέγξασθαι.³⁴

In the ninety-fifth year of his life he was, apart from being old, also somewhat infirm in his body. Having gone out, then, from his cell in a moonless night in order to pass water – the place was about a stone's throw away from the cell –, he guided himself with the staff on his way back and found on the right side of the path thick thorns, which he followed and thereby lost his cell. And despite much toil he could not find it. Finally following the thorns he ascended to the pinnacle of the vineyard, and having found its fence he took leave of his senses. Feeling weak and not being able to do anything he slumped on it. And he stood there until the board of the monastery was sounded. According to the dispensation of God his disciple went out and, when he did not find him in his cell, called the brethren and after they had grabbed lamps they finally found him standing on the fence and leaning on his staff and not able to make a sound at all.

On the 'historical' level this narrative is evidently quite different from the one that we have discussed so far. While Lazarus is a run-away adolescent *en route* to Jerusalem, Cyril is an ancient hermit who lives out his days in the monastery of his brother where he is being cared for. Moreover, whereas Lazarus runs away from a highway because he is in danger of being enslaved, the context in the *Life* of Cyril is much more mundane: the saint loses his bearings on his way to his cell after he has relieved himself in the nearby latrine of the monastery. Nevertheless, the two stories have several motifs in common: like

33 On Cyril cf. M. Kaplan, 'In search of St Cyril's Philea', in M. Mullett and A. Kirby (ed.), *Work and Worship at the Theotokos Evergetis* [Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations 6.2] (Belfast 1997) 213–21.

34 *Life* of Cyril of Philea 54.2, ed. Sargologos, 256–7.

Lazarus, Cyril strays from the path he is on and laboriously climbs up to the top of an incline in the middle of a dark night where he is eventually found by somebody else.

This suggests that this narrative, too, has an allegorical dimension and that this dimension again gives it a negative meaning. Fortunately for us, this hypothesis can be confirmed through comparison with a passage in an earlier part of the text where Cyril tells the following story to a visitor:

δένδρον ἐφύτευσεν ὁ θεὸς παμμέγεθες φθάνον ἕως τοῦ οὐρανοῦ· κέκτηται δὲ τοὺς καρποὺς ἀειθαλεῖς καὶ παρηλλαγμένους· ἐν γὰρ τῷ δεξιῷ καὶ εὐωνύμῳ μέρει τῶν κάτω καὶ μέσων καρπῶν παραπεπήγασι ἄκανθαι.³⁵

God planted a huge tree that reached unto heaven. It possesses choice fruits that sprout forever. And on the right and left sides of the fruits of lower and middle levels thorns are affixed.

This passage shows marked similarities with the episode we have discussed so far: the phrase ‘for in the right ... part ... of the fruits there are thorns’ (ἐν γὰρ τῷ δεξιῷ ... μέρει τῶν ... καρπῶν παραπεπήγασι ἄκανθαι) that we find here has an almost literal parallel in the sentence ‘in the right part of the path he found thick thorns’ (εὕρισκεν ἐν τῷ δεξιῷ μέρει τῆς τρίβου ἀκάνθας χονδράς), which describes how the ancient saint loses his way. However, in this case it is clearly part of an allegory where the fruit-tree symbolises the ascent of the monk to perfection. This dimension is made explicit by Cyril when his visitor then asks what the allegory is supposed to signify. Cyril explains that the thorns, which grow to the right and the left of the fruits, are ‘the excesses and shortcomings regarding the commandments of God’ (αἱ ὑπερβολαὶ καὶ ἐλλείψεις ... τῶν ἐντολῶν τοῦ θεοῦ).³⁶ There can thus be no doubt that the later account of the saint’s mishap also has a negative meaning and that it is linked to ‘excessive behaviour’.

This raises the question: where did Cyril err? At first it appears that he has done nothing wrong because the author states that when he had recovered ‘Cyril told us how the temptation had happened to him because of the molestation of demons and their great envy’ (διηγήσατο ἡμῖν πῶς ἐκ δαιμονικῆς ἐπηρείας καὶ τοῦ πολλοῦ φθόνου αὐτῶν συμβέβηκεν αὐτῷ ὁ πειρασμός).³⁷ This gives the impression that the mishap was caused by outside interference, and Nicholas does not seem to disagree with this interpretation. However, a closer look suggests that the matter is not so straightforward and that the saint has brought this on himself. The first indication that this may be the case is found at the end of the episode that has been quoted above. There it is said that the saint was so badly affected ‘because he was chilled from the great cold, wearing only one garment, and being old and infirm’ (ἀπεπάγη γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦ πολλοῦ ψύχους, μονοχίτων ὢν, καὶ γέρον καὶ ἀσθενής).³⁸ This establishes a close link between

35 *Life of Cyril of Philea* 46.5, ed. Sargologos, 215.

36 *Life of Cyril of Philea* 46.8, ed. Sargologos, 217.

37 *Life of Cyril of Philea* 54.2, ed. Sargologos, 257.

38 *Life of Cyril of Philea* 54.2, ed. Sargologos, 257.

the saint's condition and his insufficient clothing. A look at the wider context shows that this is a leitmotif in Nicholas' account of the last years of the saint. This account takes the form of a meticulous chronicle of Cyril's physical decline, into which longer episodes are inserted.³⁹ Right from the start this decline is said to be caused by two factors, 'by great old age and by unrelenting asceticism' (ὑπὸ τοῦ πολλοῦ γήρως καὶ τῆς ἀνενδότου ἀσκήσεως).⁴⁰ This theme is then taken up again in the following chapters. Before he narrates the mishap of the saint in the vineyard the author states how he visited Cyril 'and when I found him ailing and lying on an uncomfortable mattress, I entreated him to put hay on top of his cover, so as to have a little respite from the excessive harshness' (ὥς δὲ εὗρον ἀσθενοῦντα καὶ ἐν ἀπαράκλητῳ στρωμνῇ κείμενον, παρεκάλεσα ἐπιθεῖναι ἐπάνω τοῦ ψαθίου αὐτοῦ χόρτον, ὅπως μικρὰν τινα ἀνάπαυσιν ἔξει ἐκ τῆς ἄγαν σκληρότητος).⁴¹ And immediately afterwards we hear that from then on Cyril was ill and that 'after long entreaties we barely persuaded him to moderate his fasting regime so as to eat fish and wine' (πολλὰ παρακαλέσαντες αὐτὸν μόλις ἐπέισαμεν καταλῦσαι εἰς ἰχθὺν καὶ οἶνον).⁴²

The saint's dilemma is obvious: his old age no longer allows him to adhere to the rigorous asceticism without endangering his life. Byzantine audiences would have been familiar with this theme because it surfaced in a contemporary debate about whether or not monks should moderate their behaviour according to their age and health. In the *Life* of Cyril this debate is alluded to in a long speech of the saint to his disciple in which he explains that it is the intention that counts and not the actual practice.⁴³ This speech sits ill with Cyril's own behaviour and is without doubt a reflection of the views of the hagiographer and not of the saint himself.

Therefore one can argue that Nicholas uses the episode of the saint's mishap on his way back from the latrine in order to criticise his hero in a roundabout fashion.⁴⁴ By having him stray to the right of the path and then climb up an incline he could indicate that the saint's behaviour was excessive, and by letting this happen on a moonless night he could insinuate that Cyril suffered from a lack of discretion, which prevented him from seeing what was good for him.⁴⁵

Accordingly, the nocturnal travails of the ancient Cyril can be regarded as the counterpart of the troubles of the young Lazarus: both saints adhere to an extreme

39 *Life* of Cyril of Philea 53–55, ed. Sargologos, 249–262. Two narratives are intercalated: the story under discussion and an elaborate account of a demonic vision, cf. *Life* of Cyril of Philea 53, ed. Sargologos, 249–55.

40 *Life* of Cyril of Philea 53.1, ed. Sargologos, 249.

41 *Life* of Cyril of Philea 54.1, ed. Sargologos, 255–6.

42 *Life* of Cyril of Philea 54.3, ed. Sargologos, 257–8.

43 *Life* of Cyril of Philea 54.1, ed. Sargologos, 256.

44 It may not be coincidental that the account of the saint's last years is immediately preceded by a cautionary tale about excessive asceticism, cf. *Life* of Cyril of Philea 52, ed. Sargologos, 245–8.

45 Cf. e.g. Maximus, *Gnostic Centuries* II.33, MPG 90, col. 1140C1-D2 where the moon is interpreted as a symbol of 'natural discretion' (φυσικὴ διάκρισις), which gives off a 'measured light' (φῶς σύμμετρον).

life-style that is inappropriate for their age and their specific circumstances, which then accounts for the similarities between the two episodes.

At this point we can conclude that like the Italian poet Dante Byzantine hagiographers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries gave their writings an allegorical dimension. Moreover, it seems that both Dante and the hagiographers shared an allegorical language in which single features such as the 'straight road' have fixed positive and negative connotations that reflect a particular value system. However, at least for the Byzantine world this second conclusion needs to be considerably modified. As we have seen, the allegorical narrative about the tree of God, which Cyril of Philea tells his visitor, speaks of fruits to which thorns adhere both on the left and on the right sides, an image that clearly expresses the concept that virtue is to be found in the middle between two equally negative extremes. However, when we look closer, we find that Cyril speaks at this point only about the fruits that are found at the lower and middle branches of the tree. This is a reference to the stages of spiritual ascent, which lead from an introductory level to an advanced level and then finally to the level of perfection. Accordingly, this last level is described at the end of the speech:

τῆς δὲ κορυφῆς οἱ καρποὶ οὐ κέκτηνται τι λυποῦν ... ἴσταται δὲ <sc. τὸ δένδρον> ἐν τόπῳ ἔχοντι ἐν μὲν τῷ εὐωνύμῳ μέρει ζοφῶδες χάος ἐν ᾧ εἰσιν πάντα τὰ ἰόβολα ζῶα, ἐν δὲ τῷ δεξιῷ μέρει στενὴν τινὰ ὁδὸν καὶ τεθλιμμένην ἣν ὑπέδειξεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ.⁴⁶

The fruits of the top do not have anything distressful in them. ... And (sc. the tree) stands in a place that has in the right part dark chaos in which are all the venomous animals, and in the left part a narrow and difficult road, which God has shown to his servants.

In this passage we also find juxtaposition between the elements 'in the left part' (ἐν μὲν τῷ εὐωνύμῳ μέρει) and 'in the right part' (ἐν δὲ τῷ δεξιῷ μέρει), but the framework in which they appear is completely different: now only the left is described in negative terms whereas the right is considered positive and indeed more so than the tree itself, which takes the middle position. This reminds us that in the Byzantine monastic discourse the 'golden mean' was not a universally recognised value system and that many people regarded excessive asceticism as the true pinnacle of monastic life. In this alternative framework 'straying to the right' would be an entirely positive behaviour. Accordingly we find reinterpretations of the Biblical quotations on which the concept of the 'golden mean' was based. An example for such reinterpretation comes from the ninth-century *Life of Theophanes Confessor* by Patriarch Methodius: 'Praised be his turning to righteousness and his expansion on the right side, which no longer has Solomon's rebuke not to deviate to the right or to the left because the right is not a deceptive right but is the true right' (ὃ ἐπικλίσεως τῷ δικαίῳ καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ δεξιῷ προσθέσεως οὐκ ἐχούσης ἐπιτιμίαν ἔτι σολομώντειον τοῦ μὴ ἐκκλίνειν δεξιά ἢ εὐώνυμα διὰ τὸ μὴ ἐν

46 *Life of Cyril of Philea* 46.3, ed. Sargologos, 215.

ἀπάτη εἶναι δεξιὸν ἀλλ' ἐν ἀληθείᾳ πεφυκέναι δεξιόν).⁴⁷ Passages such as this suggest that Nicholas Kataskepenos tried to reconcile the two frameworks by limiting the validity of the concept of the 'golden mean' to the lower and middle stages of monastic life so as to ensure proper socialisation into monastic life and at the same time to create space for exceptional figures such as Cyril of Phileas himself.⁴⁸

That the same motifs can have negative and positive connotations, depending on the views of the hagiographer, is evident from the ninth-century *Life* of Euarestus of Kokorobion. There the nocturnal exploits of the saint and his companion Eubiotus are narrated in the following manner:

μετὰ γὰρ τήνδε τὴν ὥραν κύκλῳ καὶ οὐ κατ' εὐθεΐαν τὴν καταγωγὴν περιήεσαν ἅμα· εἴ που δὲ καὶ στενωπὸς τις ὑπῆρξεν ἐγκόρσιος ἢ χωρίου κοίλωμα ἕτερον, ἐν τούτοις ἐφοίτων ἐκκλίνοντες, τὸν κόπον ἄγαν ἐπιτείνοντες τοῦ βαδίσματος.⁴⁹

For after this hour they went around together in the abode in a circle and not in a straight fashion; if there was somewhere a slanted lane or another depression of the place, they went into them, deviating, increasing very much the toil of the walking.

In this passage the saints' movements within the monastic compound are described in astonishing detail. Indeed, features such as the juxtaposition between circular movement and movement in a straight line seem to be redundant if we assume that the author had merely wished to give a straightforward account of events. However, this impression of redundancy disappears when we consider the metaphorical connotations of the various terms and phrases. Such connotations are particularly evident in the case of the verb ἐκκλίνειν, which is followed by ἄγαν ἐπιτείνειν, a phrase that brings to mind the formula 'extremely intensive asceticism' (ἄγαν ἐπιτεταμένη ἀσκησις), which often occurs in Byzantine texts.⁵⁰ But does this mean that such behaviour is seen in a critical light? Here one needs to extend the discussion to the places into which the two saints are said to have turned: they are identified as 'lane' (στενωπός) and 'depression' (κοίλωμα). Both of these terms have positive connotations: στενωπός conjures up the Biblical image of the 'narrow road' (στενὴ ὁδός) on which the chosen walk,⁵¹ and κοίλωμα can

47 Methodius of Constantinople, *Vita S. Theophanis Confessoris*, ed. V. V. Latysev [Zapiski rossijskoj akademii nauk. viii. ser. po istoriko-filologičeskomu otdeleniju 13.4] (St Petersburg 1918) 7.14–19.

48 For similar attempts at reconciling the two models in Late Antiquity cf. Lumpe, 'Königsweg', 220. It needs to be said, however, that Nicholas seems to be confused for in the following interpretation of the narrow path on the 'right side' he again introduces the framework of the 'golden mean', cf. *Life* of Cyril of Phileas 46.8, ed. Sargologos, 218.

49 C. Van de Vorst, 'La vie de s. Évariste, higoumène à Constantinople', *AB* 41 (1923) 287–325, esp. 304.30–3.

50 Cf. e.g. John Chrysostom, *Ad populum Antiochenum*, MPG 49, col. 19D: ὡς καὶ εἰς ἀσθένειαν ἐμπεσεῖν ἐκ τῆς ἄγαν σκληραγωγίας καὶ ἐπιτεταμένης νηστείας.

51 A passage where στενὴ ὁδός and στενωπός appear side by side can be found in John Chrysostom, *Eclogae*, MPG 63, col. 871.

be understood as a reference to humility: as we have seen Michael Psellos states in his letter to John Xiphilinos that the addressee should come down from the lofty heights of Mt Olympus and hide away wherever there is 'a plain or a very deep depression, or a cleft ravine or a hole in the ground' (πεδιάς ἢ βαθυτάτη κοιλίας, ἢ φάραξ διερρογυῖα ἢ μυχὸς γῆς) in order to rid himself of his overweening pride.⁵² Thus one could argue that the 'deviation from the straight road' and the concept of extreme asceticism with which it is associated are given a positive meaning through appeal to the argument that the ideal of moderation only applies to the average monk and by insinuating that despite their hardships the saints remained humble, a point that had already been made explicitly in the immediately preceding sentence.⁵³

Such a scenario is not as far-fetched as it might first seem: after all, exegetes of the Bible were used to interpreting the same features in both positive and negative ways,⁵⁴ and there is no reason to exclude off-hand that hagiographers did not anticipate such an approach from their readers and write their texts accordingly. It is evident that one would need to analyse a much wider range of texts in order to arrive at a better understanding of this 'subterranean' discourse and its relevance for the debate about the proper monastic life-style. The aim of this short article has been much more modest, namely to show that like Dante Byzantine hagiographers did encode an allegorical dimension into their texts and that they did so in order to make value judgements that complement explicit evaluations of the behaviour of saints.

52 See above note 15.

53 Cf. *Life of Euarestus of Kokorobion* 10, ed. Van de Vorst, 304.27–9: ἵνα μὴ φανερόν τι γένηται τῆς αὐτῶν ἀγρυπνίας τὸ ἐπιτήδευμα κἀντεῦθεν κενοδοξίας βλάβην οὐκ ἀποφεύζονται.

54 For allegorical interpretations *in bonam partem* and *in malam partem* cf. e.g. P. Lee Gauch and J. Whitman, *Interpretation and Allegory: antiquity to the modern period* (Leiden 2003) 393.

Warfare and propaganda: the portrayal of Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282–1328) as an incompetent military leader in the *Histories* of John VI Kantakouzenos (1347–54)

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The Histories of Kantakouzenos is the main source for the civil war between Andronikos II and Andronikos III which was fought intermittently from 1321 until 1328. This article examines how Kantakouzenos remodelled and fabricated events, conversations and deliberations in order to depict Andronikos II as an incompetent military leader. By criticizing Andronikos II's military abilities and by blaming him for the military failures of the period, Kantakouzenos diverts suspicion of his personal responsibility and Andronikos III's mistakes that led to the advance of Byzantium's enemies and demonstrates that the elder Andronikos was not worthy of being on the throne.

The *Histories* of the *megas domestikos* and later emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, which cover the period 1320–1356 and were compiled in the 1360s, are a detailed narrative of the political and military events of the period and the main source for the civil wars and conflicts between the cliques of the social elite, which dominated the first half of the fourteenth century.¹ The aim of Kantakouzenos was to explain his view of the events which took place from the 1320s until the 1350s and to justify his involvement in the civil wars of 1321–28 and 1341–47 which ruined Byzantium. In 1320, Kantakouzenos appears to have been an associate of Andronikos II's son and co-emperor, Michael IX (1294–1320), and in command of military forces in Gallipoli. The unexpected death of Michael IX in 1320 meant that his close associates, the most prominent being John Kantakouzenos, Theodore Synadenos and Syrgiannes, lost hope of gaining imperial favour and privileges. This induced them to rally around the deceased co-emperor's son Andronikos, who had been removed from the imperial line of succession, and to rebel actively against

1 On the dating of the *Histories* of Kantakouzenos see H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I (Munich 1978) 469; D. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos (Cantacuzenus) ca. 110-1460* (Washington 1986) 100.

Andronikos II. Kantakouzenos was one of the main protagonists of this revolt which led to the civil war that was fought intermittently from 1321 until 1328. He gave financial support for the revolt of the younger Andronikos and his network of kinsmen, friends and associates contributed to the final victory of the rebels.²

Therefore, it is not surprising that throughout his *Histories* Kantakouzenos is critical of Andronikos II. Much of Kantakouzenos' criticism of Andronikos II retained the traditional focus on the emperor's personal foibles.³ Excessive anger and unreasonable hatred towards his grandson are seen as the reasons why Andronikos II removed his grandson from the imperial line of succession.⁴ Moreover, Andronikos II is depicted as a ruler who was surrounded and influenced by corrupt officials and bad advisers. The responsibility for the outbreak of the civil war in 1321 is assigned not to the elder emperor himself, but to his close associate, the *megas logothetes* Theodore Metochites. Similarly, the outbreak of the last phase of the civil war in 1327 is attributed to the deceitful attitude and slanderous statements of Metochites who, together with the *protovestiarios* Andronikos Palaiologos, incited Andronikos II to restart the war against his grandson.⁵

Nevertheless, a significant part of the criticism directed against Andronikos II concentrates on his lack of military abilities. The examination of Kantakouzenos' criticism of the military skills and policies of Andronikos II contributes to a better understanding of the *Histories* and provides a useful insight into Kantakouzenos' perception of the imperial office. Throughout his *Histories* Kantakouzenos promotes the idea that the emperor should be a dedicated warrior. Among the reasons he gives in not supporting Andronikos II's inclusion of Michael Katharos, the illegitimate son of Constantine Palaiologos (Andronikos II's second son), in the line of imperial succession after the death of Michael IX, is that Katharos did not have any military training and experience.⁶ The real motive behind this statement is Kantakouzenos' opposition to the removal of the younger Andronikos from the line of succession. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that Kantakouzenos bases his opposition on the fact that Katharos was not a soldier. In another instance, Kantakouzenos states that when Andronikos III fell seriously ill (1329), circumstances demanded that the empire be ruled by someone who had proven his courage and daring spirit in war and was not only an experienced soldier and good general but also a great general who was very well trained in matters of war.⁷ In his account of the deliberations and plots that followed Andronikos III's death in 1341, Kantakouzenos reports that Alexios Apokaukos had told Andronikos Asan that the latter was the

2 For a narrative of the events of 1321–28 see U. Bosch, *Kaiser Andronikos. Palaiologos. Versuch einer Darstellung der Byzantinischen Geschichte in den Jahren 1321–1341* (Amsterdam 1321–41) 9–78.

3 D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium. 1204–1330* (Cambridge 2007) 256.

4 John Kantakouzenos, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni ex imperatoris historiarum libri IV*, eds. L. Schopen-B. Niebuhr, I (Bonn 1828), 14, 22–3 (hereafter, Kantakouzenos).

5 Kantakouzenos, I, 26–7, 32–4, 54–5, 68–70, 210–12.

6 Kantakouzenos, I, 15.

7 Kantakouzenos, I, 425.

proper person to succeed the deceased emperor, 'not only because of his bravery and experience in wars, but also due to his illustrious ancestry and prudence.'⁸

From Kantakouzenos' point of view Andronikos II lacked military ability and experience. To emphasize Andronikos II's ignorance of matters of war, Kantakouzenos reports a conversation between the elder emperor and the general Manuel Tagaris. When in April 1321 Andronikos III and his associates fled Constantinople and moved to Adrianople in order to organize their revolt, Andronikos II ordered Tagaris to recruit as many soldiers as he needed and pursue them. Andronikos II was certain that the soldiers of the younger Andronikos would not have the courage to face Tagaris' army and that capturing the rebels would be an easy task. Manuel Tagaris, whom Kantakouzenos portrays as an experienced and prudent general, disagreed. He argued that it was too risky to campaign against an enemy the size of which he did not know. He added that by the time his army would be able to leave Constantinople, Andronikos III and his followers would have found a safe place to prepare their defence. Consequently, Andronikos II's plan could not work.⁹

Andronikos II's lack of military ability is contrasted with the military prowess of Kantakouzenos and Andronikos III. The *Histories* include a significant number of examples which extol Kantakouzenos' and Andronikos III's heroic deeds on the battlefield. Kantakouzenos describes how he and Andronikos III risked their lives fighting against a Turkish raiding party in Thrace. The emperor was wounded in his leg and his horse, which was severely wounded, died shortly after the battle. Kantakouzenos was surrounded by many enemy soldiers and received many blows. However, paradoxically he was saved. His horse was severely wounded.¹⁰ In 1330, Andronikos III took by surprise a Turkish raiding force which was plundering in Thrace and had been divided into two groups. Leading a small force he crushed the first group of raiders and killed many of them. He was indignant at the fact that the second group did not dare to face his army and fled to Asia.¹¹ The *Histories* describe in detail how in 1337 Kantakouzenos and Andronikos III are supposed to have decimated a large Ottoman army which raided Byzantine possessions around Trigleia. Kantakouzenos ambushed and killed many Ottomans. Shortly afterwards, riding Kantakouzenos' horse, Andronikos III pursued the remaining Ottomans and killed many of them.¹²

It is worth adding that Kantakouzenos' depiction of Andronikos III as a great military leader is contradicted by Nikephoros Gregoras. Having been a supporter of Andronikos II during the civil war of 1321-28, Gregoras wishes to demonstrate that Andronikos III was a poor general. In his account of the battle of Pelekanos/Philokrene (1329), where the Byzantines under the command of Andronikos III were defeated at the

8 Kantakouzenos, II, 115.

9 Kantakouzenos, I, 91-3.

10 Kantakouzenos, I, 207.

11 Kantakouzenos, I, 335.

12 Kantakouzenos, I, 505-7.

hands of the Ottomans, Gregoras presents the emperor as an inexperienced commander who cannot understand the fighting techniques of the enemy.¹³ Similarly, he holds Andronikos III personally responsible for the crushing defeat the Bulgarians inflicted on the Byzantines in Rosokastron in 1332. Gregoras argues that Andronikos III raided Bulgarian possessions unjustifiably and without any provocation. Being engaged in burning and plundering the countryside, Andronikos III was caught by surprise when the Bulgarian ruler John Alexander (1331–71) assembled his army and counterattacked. As a result, the Byzantine army was crushed and the emperor did not dare to send envoys to negotiate a peace agreement since his raid had inflicted devastation on the Bulgarian countryside.¹⁴

The military conflicts with Bulgaria and the collapse of the Byzantine defences in Asia Minor provided Kantakouzenos with the opportunity to criticize the military policies of Andronikos II and portray Andronikos III as a great soldier emperor, whose aim was to restore the empire's military strength. Kantakouzenos reports that in 1323, the Bulgarian ruler, Michael Šišman (1323–30), raided Thrace for twelve days and reached Vera. However, the Bulgarians did not cause any serious damage to the Byzantines because special care had been taken and the farmers were protected inside fortresses and cities.¹⁵ The moving of people from the countryside to the cities, including their flocks and supplies, so that the damage caused by the enemy would be minimized and the enemy would not find supplies and booty, was an effective method of dealing with enemy raids. For instance, Gregoras reports that Andronikos II had constructed fifteen fortresses along the frontier with Bulgaria for the protection of the population from the raids of the Tatars.¹⁶ Nonetheless, the raid led by the Bulgarian emperor provided Kantakouzenos with an opportunity and presented Andronikos III as an energetic soldier emperor who was indignant at Andronikos II's inability to fight the Bulgarians. Kantakouzenos reports that Andronikos III was 'burning with anger' because he was unable to attack the invaders, since his army was not sufficient. Wishing to promote Andronikos III's military profile, Kantakouzenos remarked that he challenged Michael Šišman to a duel. Unsurprisingly, the Bulgarian ruler did not accept the challenge and returned to his lands. Andronikos III allegedly told his grandfather,

It is not right, while we possess a large and good army, not to raid the enemy land in the manner the enemy plunders our possessions and [instead] either to remain idle and completely inactive, or to send embassies, admitting by these deeds that we are able only to suffer badly, and are no longer able to act against the enemy. For this reason, I ask you, emperor, to permit us to campaign against them. After

13 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia*, ed. L. Schopen, I (Bonn, 1829) I, 434 (hereafter Gregoras); S. Kyriakidis, 'Byzantine responses to the battlefield tactics of the armies of the Turkoman principalities: the battle of Pelekanos (1329),' *BZ* 103 (2010) 86.

14 Gregoras, I, 484–8.

15 Kantakouzenos, I, 179.

16 Gregoras, I, 484.

punishing the enemies for the injustice they inflicted on us, we will make peace agreements with them, if they seem beneficial, and the enemy will know that they have nothing to gain by attacking us first.¹⁷

Andronikos III's statement is followed by two long speeches allegedly delivered by Kantakouzenos in a meeting of the two emperors, at which he was present, and in a council attended by members of the higher aristocracy. Through these orations Kantakouzenos emphasizes his personal influence on the affairs of the empire and promotes the idea that under Andronikos III the empire would recover its strength and prestige. Kantakouzenos allegedly told the two emperors that all humans serve those who are better than them without being offended. However, they wish to defend themselves when they are offended by those who are equal to them. Therefore, they prefer the risk of war to slavery and glory to idleness, which is born out of the fear of suffering something worse than what they have already suffered. The Byzantine rulers, generals and soldiers are far superior to their Bulgarian counterparts. Consequently, it is wrong to leave the Bulgarians unpunished for the damage they inflicted on the empire. In the oration he delivered in the council that followed the conversation between the two emperors, Kantakouzenos pointed out that it was unacceptable for the Bulgarian ruler to raid Byzantine lands for twelve days without encountering any resistance. He repeated that the Byzantines are far superior to the Bulgarians in terms of bravery and military experience and that a punitive expedition is the means to force Michael Šišman not to invade Byzantium ever again. Kantakouzenos remarked that those who believe that passive defence and withdrawing people into fortresses during an enemy invasion are effective measures deceive themselves, since the enemy will be able to attack again in the future. Moreover, Kantakouzenos reminded his audience that their ancestors were always victorious against the Bulgarians and exhorted his contemporaries to emulate the virtues and determination of their ancestors to fight.¹⁸ Wishing to criticize the government of Andronikos II, Kantakouzenos concludes that, while both emperors approved his ideas, the associates of the elder emperor disagreed with the proposal to wage war against the Bulgarians. Kantakouzenos attributes their reaction to their personal interests and blames them for being uninterested in the common good.¹⁹

The campaign against the Bulgarians was never undertaken. Instead, embassies were exchanged and a peace agreement was reached.²⁰ It is difficult to establish whether the aforementioned conversations and speeches were a fabrication of Kantakouzenos or not. Nevertheless, they enabled him to promote Andronikos III's imperial profile. By referring to the need to emulate the bravery of the ancestors of the Byzantines, who were always victorious against the Bulgarians, Kantakouzenos promotes the idea that Andronikos III's reign was a revival of a glorious past. Andronikos II and his government

17 Kantakouzenos, I, 180.

18 Kantakouzenos, I, 184.

19 Kantakouzenos, I, 186.

20 Kantakouzenos, I, 187.

are blamed for not defending the Byzantine frontier effectively and for dealing with the Bulgarian attacks with unreasonable idleness.

Kantakouzenos repeats his criticism of the military policies of Andronikos II in his account of the Byzantine response to another raid led by Michael Šišman in 1328, shortly after the accession of Andronikos III as sole emperor. After capturing Voukelon, the Bulgarian army besieged Provatou. Andronikos III headed with his army from Didymoteichon to Provatou and after thirty days of fruitless negotiations a battle seemed inevitable. It is worth noting that in 1323 Kantakouzenos was indignant at the fact that the Bulgarians had raided Byzantine territories for twelve days and he proposed a punitive expedition against them. However, he is not critical of the fact that in 1328 Michael Šišman's raid lasted much longer and that Andronikos III, instead of planning a counterattack, conducted negotiations with the invaders. Nonetheless, promoting the idea that Andronikos III reorganized the Byzantine army and restored its strength, Kantakouzenos provides a vivid description of the deployment of the Byzantine troops. He writes that,

Everybody was armed. Not only the soldiers were magnificently decorated, but also the horses, some with armour made of leather, others with chain armour. And one could see the Byzantine army being magnificently deployed not only because of the arms and horses, but also because of its large size. Before that moment, the army had not been joined together for a long time. And the entire army of the west was present and the Thracians and the Macedonians and those from the cities of the east who were subjects of the Byzantines. And from Constantinople there were not only horsemen, but many foot soldiers, heavy infantrymen and light archers as well.²¹

Kantakouzenos relates that, when Michael Šišman was told the size of the Byzantine army and saw the eagerness of the Byzantine soldiers to fight, he decided to retreat. Kantakouzenos sees the withdrawal of the Bulgarian army as a bloodless victory of Andronikos III and comments that the soldiers were annoyed because they missed the opportunity to capture booty. Kantakouzenos concludes his account of this event by contrasting Andronikos III's determination to face the Bulgarians militarily with his grandfather's lack of military ability. He writes,

In the past, when the elder Andronikos was emperor, the Bulgarians were able to invade the Byzantine lands many times because there was no one to confront them; instead the emperor was always trying to resolve differences with them through embassies and promises. Because of this, they thought that they would still be regarded as unconquerable by the Roman emperors. However, seeing the emperor (Andronikos III) leading a large and good army, Michael Šišman did not share this view. Instead, he thought it necessary to withdraw.²²

21 Kantakouzenos, I, 326.

22 Kantakouzenos, I, 328.

The criticism the *Histories* make of Andronikos II's policies with regard to the defence of Asia Minor is rather interesting, since in the early years of his reign Andronikos II had made war against the Turks his main priority and John Kantakouzenos has been blamed for contributing to the expansion of the Turks by using them as mercenaries and allies in the civil conflicts of the 1340s and 1350s. Andronikos II, together with his father, Michael VIII (1259–82), campaigned in 1280–82 in Asia Minor and from 1290 until 1293 he settled with his court in the area. His activities during his stay in Asia Minor seem to have been limited to repairing fortifications and building new ones. Nonetheless, the wars against the Turks in Asia Minor became ideologically important under Andronikos II. This is reflected in the imperial panegyrics which were compiled by high-ranking officials and close associates of the emperor. In his second imperial oration, which he delivered during the emperor's stay in Asia Minor, Theodore Metochites commented that while Michael VIII was still alive and most of the army had been transferred to the western parts of the empire, Andronikos II inflicted significant defeats on the Turks and restored order in Asia Minor. Metochites points out that Andronikos II's consistent and systematic efforts in Asia Minor saved it from the Turkish advance.²³

Furthermore, the panegyrics composed by Theodore Metochites' predecessor in the office of *megas logothetes*, Nikephoros Choumnos, and the patriarch Gregory of Cyprus, depict the campaigns the emperor undertook in 1280/82 and his activities in 1290–93 as military triumphs. Choumnos remarks that despite the fact that Andronikos II had to fight against numerous enemies on the western frontiers of the empire, he inflicted significant defeats on the Turks. As he writes, 'it was not enough for you to keep away, thwart and massacre the barbarians, if they occasionally escape notice and come upon us, because you knew how to put into action all the plans and actions against them.'²⁴ In another imperial panegyric, Gregory of Cyprus remarks that as a result of Andronikos II's victories over the Turks the river Cayster turned red with Turkish blood. The orator Nikolaos Lampenos, who compiled his encomium between 1296–1303, writes that Andronikos II inflicted a just punishment on the Turks who no longer dare to cross the Byzantine frontier. In Lydia, as Lampenos writes, the wise leadership of the emperor led to a great victory against the Turks who, being struck by fear, ran for their lives. Many of them were killed by the sword and their blood flowed like a river.²⁵

In the 1320s the Byzantine possessions in Asia Minor were reduced to a few heavily fortified cities which were blockaded by the forces of various Turcoman chiefdoms. Kantakouzenos strives to show that Andronikos II was indifferent to the plight of Byzantine Asia Minor and blames him for preventing his grandson from reinforcing the defences of

23 Theodore Metochites, *Οι δύο Βασιλικοί Λόγοι*, ed. I. Polemis (Athens 2007) 320–28, 338–46.

24 *Anecdota graeca e codicibus regiis*, ed. J. Boissonade, II (Paris 1829–33, repr. Hildesheim 1962) 21, 25–8, 31 (hereafter *Anecdota graeca*).

25 *Anecdota graeca*, I, 378; Nikolaos Lampenos, *Ὁ λόγιος Νικόλαος Λαμπηνός καὶ τὸ ἐγκώμιον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν Ἀνδρόνικον Β' Παλαιολόγον*, ed. I. Polemis (Athens 1992) 46–8 (hereafter Lampenos).

Byzantine cities. Kantakouzenos remarks that, while the senior emperor and his associates were plotting to restart the civil war, Andronikos III sent an embassy to Andronikos II complaining that he was prevented from reinforcing the defence of Prusa which was blockaded by the Ottomans. According to Kantakouzenos the elder Andronikos was told,

You know that the city of the Prusians is besieged by the Turks and it is expected to fall owing to the complete shortage of wheat. Once I was informed about this, I came to Constantinople on my own initiative to request and advise bringing aid to the besieged. The form of this aid would be for me to head with the army and ships to Trigleia, because it is not far from Prusa, and if I am able to do so, I will attack the barbarians and get the necessities to the besieged. If this happens, they (the Prusians) will gain the hope to sustain a long siege. From any other perspective the city is well constructed to defend itself. And I was very willing to risk my life to aid the Prusians; however, since you did not let me do so, I reluctantly held back. And this is considered to be the cause of Prusa's surrender to the barbarians who besieged it.²⁶

The criticism of the policies of Andronikos II with regard to the defence of Asia Minor is apparent in Kantakouzenos' account of the battle of Pelekanos/Philokrenes where the Byzantines under the command of Andronikos III were defeated by the Ottomans who were led by Orhan (1326–62). Kantakouzenos' discussion of the battle, though thorough, does not reflect its strategic importance. It is an attempt to establish that during the reign of Andronikos III and while he was *megas domestikos*, the Byzantines were able to resist the Ottomans.²⁷

Kantakouzenos begins his account of the battle of Pelekanos with the statement that because the emperor was indignant at seeing the Turks continuously campaigning against the Byzantines, while the Byzantines never undertook an expedition against them, he knew that he needed to undertake an expedition against the 'barbarians' in Bithynia.²⁸ Therefore, Kantakouzenos implies that the cause of this campaign, which was undertaken roughly a year after the accession of Andronikos III as sole emperor, was the inability of Andronikos II to thwart the Turkish expansion. To strengthen his argument and his criticism of the policies of Andronikos II, Kantakouzenos included in his account of the battle a speech which Orhan is supposed to have delivered before his generals, among whom were Qulaguz and Bahadur who, according to Kantakouzenos, were comrades of Orhan's father, Osman.²⁹ Orhan allegedly told his generals,

I think there is no one among you who has not noticed the experience and daring spirit of the Byzantines in the battle. And I think that you would agree with me

26 Kantakouzenos, I, 220.

27 Kyriakidis, 'Byzantine responses,' 85.

28 Kantakouzenos, I, 341.

29 For Qulaguz and Bahadur see G. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica* II (Berlin 1958) 162, 205.

that neither against us, nor against our ancestors were there any other Byzantines who fought so gallantly and with every experience.

Orhan continued his speech by stating that the Byzantines could be defeated neither through stratagems and surprise, nor in close quarter engagements. The Byzantines displayed their bravery, retained their discipline and killed many Ottomans.³⁰ Through this speech, put into the mouth of Orhan, Kantakouzenos is criticizing Andronikos II's inability to resist the expansion of the Turks and wishes to portray Andronikos III as a soldier emperor who sees military action as the only way to stop the Turks.

As far as the outcome of the battle of Pelekanos is concerned, Kantakouzenos relates that, since it was impossible to force the Ottomans to fight on flat terrain the Byzantines decided to withdraw. Kantakouzenos argues that the withdrawal should not be seen as a defeat, since it was the reasonable thing to do and many more Turks were killed than Byzantines. Both Kantakouzenos and Gregoras point out that the lack of discipline and the false rumour that the emperor had been fatally wounded turned the Byzantine withdrawal into panicked flight.³¹ Kantakouzenos attributes the spread of the rumour to supporters of Andronikos II, who were either convinced that Andronikos III was killed, or wished to cause the Byzantine defeat and undermine the emperor. Kantakouzenos ends his report of the battle stating that when the army returned to Constantinople, Andronikos III did not inflict on those who spread the false rumour a punishment equal to the crime they committed. He did not wish to give the impression that he had punished them just because of differences with his grandfather.³² Kantakouzenos' claim that supporters of Andronikos II spread the rumour that the emperor was fatally wounded in order to cause the Byzantine defeat is most likely an attempt to vilify the deposed Andronikos II and divert suspicion of his personal responsibility and Andronikos III's mistakes that led to the Byzantine defeat. Therefore, Kantakouzenos blames the elder Andronikos and his associates for doing nothing to thwart the advance of the Turks in Asia Minor and for preventing Andronikos III from reinforcing the defence of the remaining Byzantine possessions. Kantakouzenos implies that they were more interested in plotting against Andronikos III than in assisting him in the wars against the Turks.

The inability of Andronikos II to defend Byzantium against the Turks is contrasted with the portrayal of his grandson as a dedicated warrior whom the Turks did not dare to face on the battlefield. Kantakouzenos remarks that when in 1331 the emperor was informed that the Ottomans were preparing to blockade Nikomedia, he interrupted his preparations to invade Bulgaria and rushed to Asia Minor. Kantakouzenos remarks that being panicked by Andronikos III's forthcoming attack the Ottomans picked up their tents and the rest of their equipment and returned to their bases.³³ Moreover, according to the *Histories*, the emirs of Saruhan and Aydın recognized the Byzantine

30 Kantakouzenos, I, 355–6.

31 Kantakouzenos, I, 362–3; Gregoras, I, 436.

32 Kantakouzenos, I, 359, 363.

33 Kantakouzenos, I, 460.

emperor as their sovereign. When Andronikos III visited the town of Pegai, he summoned the emir of Saruhan who arrived at the emperor's quarters as soon as he was asked to do so. The *Histories* provide a detailed description of how the ruler of Saruhan and other prominent figures of his chiefdom made obeisance, promised not to attack the Byzantine cities in Asia and received gifts from the emperor.³⁴ Kantakouzenos describes a similar scene in his account of Andronikos III's stay in New Phokaia. He relates that Saruhan visited the emperor as his servant, while the emir of Aydın, regretted that he was unable to visit the emperor and make obeisance.³⁵ Moreover, Kantakouzenos strove to show that under Andronikos III, the wars against the Turks were ideologically important. For instance, he states that during the civil war of 1321–28 he and Andronikos III regretted that the Byzantines were fighting each other. Instead, they should contemplate how they would organize the war against the barbarians (the Turks are implied) who were Byzantium's natural enemies. In his description of the battle of Rosokastron (1332) where the Byzantines were defeated at the hands of the Bulgarian emperor John Alexander, Kantakouzenos relates that Andronikos III had told the Bulgarian ruler that since both armies were of the same religion, they should not fight against each other. It is interesting that Gregoras, a supporter of Andronikos II and a critic of Andronikos III, attributes this statement to the Bulgarian emperor.³⁶

The gap between rhetoric and reality with regard to the military activities of Andronikos II and Andronikos III in Asia Minor is obvious. While imperial panegyrics praise Andronikos II for crushing the Turks and reinforcing the defences of Asia Minor, the expansion of the Turcoman principalities at the expense of the Byzantines caused the dissatisfaction of soldiers and military leaders, whose estates and sources of income were threatened by the inroads of the Turks. As a consequence, being encouraged by the local soldiery, prominent Byzantine generals in Asia Minor, such as Alexios Philanthropenos, rebelled, while governors of Byzantine cities and fortresses started co-operating with the leaders of Turcoman principalities, with whom they formed marriage alliances.³⁷ It is reasonable to conclude that the depiction of Andronikos II as a dedicated warrior who achieved great victories against the Turks is a response to the criticism he must have received for failing to repel the Turkish attacks and avert the conquest of

34 Kantakouzenos, I, 339–40.

35 Kantakouzenos, I, 388.

36 Kantakouzenos, I, 160, 462; Gregoras, I, 484.

37 For the revolt of Philanthropenos see A. Laiou, 'Some observations on Alexios Philanthropenos and Maximos Planoudes,' *BMGS* 4 (1978) 89–99. In 1299 Orhan was married to the daughter of the governor of a Byzantine city. In 1306 the general Kassianos, who was the governor of Byzantine fortresses in Mesothynia, was accused of planning a marriage alliance with the Ottomans. Bishop Mathew of Ephesos accused the governor of Philadelphia, Manuel Tagaris, of co-operating with the Turks and of marrying his daughter to a Turcoman leader: A. Bryer, 'Greek historians on the Turks: the case of the first Byzantine-Ottoman marriage,' in R.H.C. Davis-J.M.H. Wallace-Hadrill (eds.), *The writing of history in the Middle Ages. Essays Presented to Richard William Southern* (Oxford 1981) 471–93; George Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, ed. A. Failler, IV (Paris 1999) 681 (hereafter Pachymeres); Matthew of Ephesos, *Die Briefe des Matthaïos von Ephesos im Codex Vindobonensis Theol. Gr 174*, ed. D. Reinsch (Berlin 1974) 106–7.

Byzantine cities by Turks. By promoting himself as a victorious general, Andronikos II wished to assert his authority over the populations of Asia Minor, to display his determination to defend the empire's eastern frontier and to deter separatist movements initiated by local governors.

It is difficult to prove that Kantakouzenos was aware of the propaganda which promoted Andronikos II as a dedicated defender of Asia Minor. Nevertheless, Kantakouzenos wishes to show that Andronikos II was responsible for the collapse of the defence of Asia Minor and that while he was *megas domestikos* and Andronikos III emperor, the Byzantines were still able to campaign against the Turks and force their leaders to recognize the Byzantine ruler as their sovereign. However, it is probable that the gifts Saruhan received from the emperor were not a reward for his obeisance, but tribute for the protection of Byzantine possessions. It is also hard to believe that in 1331 the Ottomans retreated from Nikomedia because the Byzantine army intimidated them. Moreover, while Kantakouzenos implies that Andronikos III's reputation as a great warrior made the Ottomans lift the blockade of Nikomedia, he does not mention the fact that in 1324, the reputation of Alexios Philanthropenos, who was sent by Andronikos II to reinforce the defence of Philadelphia, was enough to make the Turks retreat.³⁸ In addition, to stave off criticism for his own and Andronikos III's policies towards the Turks and to assign the blame for the loss of Asia Minor to Andronikos II, Kantakouzenos omits mention of the fall of Nicaea and Nikomedia to the Ottomans, which occurred in the 1330s and during Andronikos III's reign as sole emperor. Nor does he report the fact that in 1333 Andronikos III agreed to pay an annual tribute of 12,000 *hyperpyra* to Orhan for the protection of fortresses of Mesothynia which were still under Byzantine control.³⁹

Nonetheless, the depiction of Andronikos III as a sovereign of the Turcoman emirs serves the aims of Kantakouzenos and is reminiscent of the imperial orations which emphasized the military triumphs of Andronikos II over the Turks, such as the panegyric composed by Nikolaos Lampenos who exclaimed, 'now the Turks have recognized their master and they are bound by oaths to serve the emperor.'⁴⁰ Furthermore, by stating that the rulers of Saruhan and Aydın made obeisance to the Byzantine emperor, Kantakouzenos justifies the fact that the success of the most important military campaigns undertaken by Andronikos III relied heavily on the military aid he received from these emirates. In 1335, when Andronikos III had secured the alliance and military aid of the fleets of the emirates of Saruhan and Aydın, he attacked the Genoese lord of Phokaia, Arrigo Tartaro, who was ruling in the name of Andreolo Catania.⁴¹ Kantakouzenos describes in detail how in 1338, the reinforcements sent by the ruler of Aydın,

38 Gregoras, I, 369.

39 P. Schreiner, *Die Byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, I (Vienna, 1975) 80; Gregoras (I, 458) refers to heavy tribute forced upon the Byzantine possessions in Bithynia.

40 Lampenos, 55.

41 Kantakouzenos, I, 480–2; Gregoras, I, 529–32.

Umur, played a decisive role in the Byzantine victory against the Albanians, which contributed to the imposition of direct imperial control over the state of Epiros. It was decided that Aydın's light infantry soldiers were more suited for this operation than the Byzantine foot soldiers.⁴²

Kantakouzenos is right to state in the preface of his *Histories* that he was an eye witness and a leading actor in the events he describes.⁴³ However, writing in the 1360s he knew that many of his statements regarding the civil war of 1321–28 and the reign of Andronikos III as sole emperor would not be easily opposed. Consequently, he did not hesitate to remodel and fabricate events, conversations, deliberations and speeches to explain his involvement in the civil war, to justify his support for the revolt of Andronikos III and to criticize Andronikos II.⁴⁴ Moreover, if we compare the information about Andronikos II provided by Kantakouzenos with that of Pachymeres, another of the emperor's critics, the first thing we note is that Kantakouzenos says almost nothing about Andronikos' fiscal policies. Pachymeres, whose account covers the period ca.1250–1307, held Andronikos II and Michael VIII personally responsible for the fiscal mismanagement of the empire. Pachymeres used economic reasoning to explain the loss of Asia Minor to the Turks and is critical of the role of local administrators and tax collectors in Asia Minor during the reign of Andronikos II.⁴⁵ Kantakouzenos' criticism of the emperor seems to lack Pachymeres' reasoning and sophistication. This can be explained by the fact that, unlike Kantakouzenos whose criticism of Andronikos II is coloured by his loyalty and association to Andronikos III, Pachymeres, despite his connections with the imperial court, was able to maintain a degree of critical distance and independent judgement.⁴⁶ In addition, the severe financial difficulties of the empire and the exhaustion of its resources as a result of the civil war prevented Kantakouzenos from praising Andronikos III's fiscal policies.

Moreover, it is certain that the promotion of the idea that the emperor should be a dedicated warrior enabled Kantakouzenos to amplify his criticism of Andronikos II, since, unlike his grandson and unlike the *mezas domestikos*, Andronikos II was not a soldier emperor. However, the criticism of the military abilities of the emperor should not be seen exclusively as an attempt to justify his grandson's subversive activities and the deposition of Andronikos II. It also reflects the social and military developments of the period and the ideals of John Kantakouzenos. Thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Byzantium witnessed continuous crises and ceaseless warfare. The empire was evolving into a second rate power which was involved in a continuous struggle to survive and defend itself against large numbers of hostile neighbours, some of whom developed

42 Kantakouzenos, I, 496–8.

43 Kantakouzenos, I, 8–10.

44 For the *Histories* of Kantakouzenos as a work of literature see A. Kazhdan, 'L' *Histoire* de Cantacuzène en tant qu' oeuvre littéraire,' *Byzantion* 50 (1980) 279–335.

45 For a detailed analysis of Pachymeres' criticism of Andronikos II see Angelov, *Imperial Ideology*, 260–3, 269–80.

46 For Pachymeres see Angelov, *Imperial Ideology*, 262.

armies far superior to those of Byzantium. It is not surprising that in this context of continuous military conflicts and threats, the imperial office was heavily militarized. Although this development is closely associated with the emergence of the military aristocracy as the ruling elite of Byzantium in the eleventh century, in late Byzantium the military virtues of emperors were emphasized far more intensively than in the past.⁴⁷ Furthermore, Kantakouzenos was not the only late Byzantine classicizing historian whose *Kaiserkritik* focuses significantly on the military abilities of the emperor. As has been noted in a different context, Gregoras' criticism of Andronikos III concentrates significantly on the military skills of the emperor. Performance in battle was one of the most prominent categories which formed George Akropolites' overview of the rulers of the so-called empire of Nicaea.⁴⁸

Furthermore, John Kantakouzenos belonged to the fourteenth-century social elite whose members sought a military career and regarded a career in the fiscal and civil bureaucracy as beneath their dignity.⁴⁹ Being also influenced by contemporary western European military ideas, they adopted an ideal of heroic individualism that promoted valour on the battlefield, which was displayed through daring acts against the enemy, coupled with excellence in physical activities such as horsemanship, hunting and jousting. The military character of the fourteenth-century Byzantine aristocracy is reflected in the *Histories* of Kantakouzenos, who comments on the military virtues of aristocrats who appear in his account, including the *megas domestikos* himself. Kantakouzenos relates that on the eve of the civil war of 1321–28 he and Syrgiannes were considered to be among the best military leaders of the Byzantine empire. They were taught the art of war by their uncle, the *megas stratopedarches* Angelos Synadenos, whose military skills and experience were far superior to those of contemporary military commanders.⁵⁰ Kantakouzenos claims that he was asked by Andronikos II to become the governor of Thessaly, which was under pressure from the Catalan duchy of Athens and needed to be governed by an experienced and prudent general.⁵¹ Describing a tournament which was organized on the occasion of the marriage of Andronikos III to Anna of Savoy in 1326, Kantakouzenos comments that the mounted esquires and nobles who accompanied Anna were brave and courageous warriors. They taught, as he writes, 'jousting and tournament to the Byzantines, who were ignorant of these games.

47 A. Kazhdan- A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley 1985) 102–13; P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos. 118–1143* (Cambridge 1993) 418–23; Angelov, *Imperial Ideology*, 83.

48 R. Macrides, *George Akropolites. The History* (Oxford 2007) 56.

49 D. Kyritses, 'Η Άλωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης και το τέλος του Βυζαντινού πολιτισμού,' in T. Kiousopoulou (ed.), *Η Άλωση της Κωνσταντινούπολης και η μετάβαση από τους μεσαιωνικούς στους νεότερους χρόνους* (Rethymnon 2005) 164.

50 Kantakouzenos, I, 20, 334. For the identification of Angelos see D. Nicol, *The reluctant emperor. A biography of John VI Cantacuzene, Byzantine emperor and monk ca. 1295–1383* (Cambridge 1996) 17.

51 Kantakouzenos, I, 85–6.

Therefore, many Byzantines practiced these games seeking honour and particularly the emperor, who proved himself superior to his tutors.⁵²

The lengthy poem Manuel Philes composed for Kantakouzenos is indicative of the adoption by the Byzantine aristocratic elite of an ideal of heroic individualism. This poem is primarily an encomium of Kantakouzenos' skills in the art of war and his physical prowess. He is depicted as someone who 'stifles with the point of his spear everything that is difficult to fight at close quarters.' He is called an 'invincible giant in battles.' Praising Kantakouzenos for his deeds against the Turks the poet writes, 'when an army of barbarians threw Thrace into confusion you teemed with arms and headed to achieve great deeds. You were standing still in the middle of the battle line roaring as a lion ready to attack its prey. And you killed with your sword the invaders.'⁵³ Therefore, the idea that the empire should be ruled by a soldier corresponded to Kantakouzenos' perceptions of the role of the imperial office and to his aristocratic ideals. Nevertheless, it served his purpose to portray Andronikos II as unworthy to be on the throne.

52 Kantakouzenos, I, 204–5.

53 Manuel Philes, *Carmina*, ed. E. Miller, I (Paris 1855) 149.

‘Feeling the rhythm of the waves: “castaway rhetoric” in John Eugenikos’ *Logos eucharisterios*’*

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In September 1438 John Eugenikos decided to quit the council of Ferrara and sail back to Constantinople. Off Italy’s Adriatic coast his vessel experienced a terrible shipwreck, whereby many of John’s fellow-passengers perished. John decided then to retell his almost deadly experience in a thanks-giving logos, allegedly compiled on the basis of notes written down soon after the shipwreck. The logos stands out as a unique document in the landscape of Byzantine travel literature. This paper offers the first comprehensive literary analysis of Eugenikos’ account, shedding new light on the narrative patterns chosen by the author to recount his own experience and stage his public persona.

Tales of survival, shipwrecks and cannibalism have always excited public curiosity. Some castaways’ adventures have become legendary through the centuries, making their way deeply into popular imagination. And yet there are also more obscure, though no less gripping, stories, which deserve our attention. One of these is to be found in John Eugenikos’ *Logos eucharisterios*.¹

In 1438 John Eugenikos, who was at the time *nomophylax*, escorted the patriarch of Constantinople Joseph II and the emperor John VIII Palaiologos on their way to the council of Ferrara.² Once in Italy, he attended the council as secretary of the doctrinal

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1 The *logos* has been published by S. P. Lampros, in *Παλαιολογία και Πελοποννησιακά* (Athens 1912/23) 271–314. On John’s work see S. Pétridès, ‘Les oeuvres de Jean Eugenikos’, *EO* 13 (1910) 281. Pétridès’ contribution still represents the only comprehensive study of John Eugenikos’ work. On other writings of John, see C. Hannick, ‘L’éloge de Jacques le Perse par Jean Eugenikos’, *B* 48 (1978) 260–87; D. Pallas, ‘Les ekphrasis de Marc et de Jean Eugénikos: le dualisme culturel vers la fin de Byzance (II)’, *B* 52 (1982) 357–74; A. Akişik, ‘Praising a city: Nicaea, Trebizond and Thessalonike’, *Journal of Turkish Studies* 36 (2011) 11–12; 24–9.

2 *Les «mémoires» du Grand Ecclésiastique de l’Eglise de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le concile de Florence (1438-1439)*, ed. V. Laurent, IX (Rome 1971) III 24 (185 and n. 10).

committee between February 8 and September 14.³ Frustrated by the lack of results of the assembly, appalled by the Latins' arrogance, disgusted by the shortage of supplies in Ferrara and anxious about the ravaging plague causing many deaths among the delegates,⁴ John obtained from the emperor the authorization to leave Italy after the summer and sailed home even before the official beginning of the council's sessions.⁵

Unfortunately, John's hopes of reaching Constantinople quickly went by the board, dashed by the rage of the Adriatic sea. On his way home, the *nomophylax* experienced the most dramatic journey of his life. His ship wrecked by a tremendous storm, he had to watch as his fellow-passengers and servants sank into the water in front of his eyes. Then, after the vessel eventually broke apart and sank, he managed to save his own life only with a hazardous jump onto a raft. Once on dry land, he produced an account of his unfortunate experience. Half a year later, in May 1439, he compiled a final version during a second (safe) journey to Constantinople.⁶

John's travel report is a elaborate and vivid narrative, full of gruesome and dark details,⁷ spiced with many touches of cultivated humour:⁸ a blend of autobiography,⁹

3 Sylvester Syropoulos relates John's complicated departure from Ferrara: Syropoulos III 24 (185 and n. 10); VI 16 (306–8); VII 1 (352). John was the brother of Mark, spokesman of the Greeks during the Council and prospective saint of the Orthodox Church. At first, Mark resolved to sail home along with his brother and desert the council, but was forced to return by the *mesazon* Laskaris (308, n. 1), sent by the emperor; Laskaris caught the escapees in Francolino. As a consequence of this episode John had to delay his departure. See also C.N. Tsirpanlis, 'John Eugenikos and the council of Florence', *B* 48 (1978) 264–4. On Mark and his appointment during the months of the council, see C.N. Tsirpanlis, 'The career and political views of Mark Eugenikos', *B* 44 (1974) 449–66.

4 See 275.5–22 (lack of results: it was even proposed that the books of Neilos Kabasilas be burnt); 275.24–276.10 (the plague); 276.11–18 (desire for Constantinople).

5 The official starting date of the council had been October 8, but on that day John Eugenikos was struggling for life in the middle of the Adriatic Sea: see J. Gill, *Constance et Bâle-Florence* (Paris 1965) 213–22. On the emperor's arrival in Italy and the preliminary sessions held in Ferrara see J. Gill (ed.), *Quae supersunt actorum graecorum Concilii Florentini*, Pars I, Res Ferrariae Gestae (Rome 1953) 1–53.

6 I. Dimitrukis, 'Die Rückreise des Johannes Eugenikos von dem Ferrara-Konzil und sein Schiffbruch auf der Adria im Jahre 1438', *Συμμείκτη* 15 (2002) 245; M. Vogel and V. Gardthausen, *Die Griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (Leipzig 1909) 171. In his article, Pétridès reproduced a fac-simile of the colophon as written by John Eugenikos' hand ('Les oeuvres', 280), stating that he finished writing down the *logos* on May 11 1439, when his ship was off Durazzo (Cod. Paris. 2075, 281 v). Paris. Gr. 2075 is handwritten by John and contains many of his works, as well as the oldest copy of Plethon's treatise *On the virtues*. See Γεώργιος Γεμιστός Πλήθων, *Περὶ ἀρετῶν*, ed., trans., commentary, B. Tambrum-Krasker (Leiden-New York-Copenhagen-Cologne 1987) 45–6. As Pétridès notes, the draft of our *logos* is still preserved and can be read in the cod. Urb. 95, fol. 265 ff.

7 See, for instance, the passage where John describes the sinking ship (291.20–292.11), or when he depicts the bodies of the passengers who have jumped overboard vanishing underwater like dolphins (293.2–3). Still more impressive is the description of the men dying aboard the raft (298.4–299.7): the vividness of the picture recalls the bodies in agony on the Raft of the Medusa. John even adds a morbid story about the alleged cannibalism of the Latins in similar situations (they were supposedly fond of dead men's livers: 301.30–302.12).

8 See for instance the joke about Ancona (279.19–25). In mentioning the Italian city, John quotes an old Platonic adage (Phdr. 257d9–e1).

9 John's story seems to evoke the 'mémoire du 'je' souffrant', as outlined by Ch. Messis, 'La mémoire du 'je' souffrant: construire et écrire la mémoire personnelle dans le récit de la captivité', in P. Odorico, P.A.

literariness, tragic pathos and comic wittiness, a little gem in late Byzantine travel literature.¹⁰ Moreover John's shipwreck chronicle conveys some details about the issues of the Ferrara council, offering a precious firsthand account, one that can be compared with the much more comprehensive and better known record left by Sylvester Syropoulos.¹¹ In listing the hot topics of the council,¹² John lingers on the verbal clashes and theological squabbles upsetting the delegates gathered in Ferrara.¹³ His notes are saturated with bitterness and resentment, and one feels quite clearly that the *nomophylax*, famously biased

Continued

Agapitos and M. Hintenberger (eds.), *L'écriture de la mémoire: la littérature de l'historiographie*, Actes du IIIe colloque international philologique, Nicosie, 6–7–8 mai 2004 (Paris 2006) 107–46 : for further literature on autobiographical narrative in Byzantium see 113, n. 17; here I will confine myself to mention the seminal M. Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz* (Vienna 1999). On individuality in Byzantine literature see also M. Mullett, 'Constructing identities in twelfth-century Byzantium', in C. Angelidi (ed.), *Byzantium Matures. Choices, sensitivities, and modes of expression (eleventh to fifteenth centuries)* (Athens 2004) 129–44; S. Papaioannou, 'The aesthetics of history: from Theophanes to Eustathios', in R. Macrides (ed.), *Byzantine history as literature*, Papers from the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (Aldershot 2010) 7–10 (focused on history writing, with further bibliography). More pertinent to Eugenikos' times is M. Angold, 'Autobiography and identity: the case of the later Byzantine empire', *BSI* 60 (1999) 36–59. For the problem of autobiography in Byzantine travel literature see also, most recently, I. Nilsson, 'La douceur de dons abondants: patronage et littérature dans la Constantinople des Comnènes', in P. Odorico (ed.), *La face cachée de la littérature Byzantine. Le texte en tant que message immédiat* (Paris 2012) 179–94. Many of Nilsson's theoretical concerns were already voiced by M. Mullett in *Theophylact of Ochrid. Reading the letters of a Byzantine archbishop* (Birmingham 1997), especially 279–90.

10 Dimitrukhas has classified John's *logos* as an ἐκφράσις. As true as it may be, his narrative can be positively described as a 'travel report' ('Die Rückreise', 229: Dimitrukhas follows Charanis' assumptions concerning the absence of a genuine travel literature in the Byzantine culture, in 'Travellers as a source for the societies of the Middle East: 900-1600', in A. E. Laiou-Thomadakis (ed.), *Charanis Studies* [New Brunswick, New Jersey 1980] 287). Already Pétridès referred to the *logos* as a 'récit de voyage' ('Les œuvres', 281). On travelling in Byzantium, see also A. Dierkens and J.-M. Sansterre (eds.), *Voyages et voyageurs à Byzance et en Occident du VI^e au XI^e siècle* (Geneva 2002). On the genre of the *logos* and his audience, see further my conclusion. On Syropoulos' account, his style and the background of his journey see 'The Syropoulos Project' of the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek, University of Birmingham (<http://www.Syropoulos.co.uk>), including an English translation of Book VI.

11 See above, n. 3. A reading of Syropoulos' account can be very helpful in reconsidering John's *logos* from a literary point of view. Syropoulos produced an absolutely straightforward report of the Greeks' turbulent journey from Constantinople to Venice, written in a plain and simple style. His travel narrative has very few things in common with the flourish-filled notes bequeathed by the *nomophylax*.

12 According to John's inventory, during the first seven months of the council the delegates quarrelled on matters concerning Purgatory (according to Sylvester Syropoulos, John was assigned the duty of reading the Fathers' writings concerning this crucial issue: Syropoulos Appendice III 10 [604. 9]), the procession of the Holy Spirit and the filioque clause. Moreover, John relates that the delegates read the work of Neilos Kabasilas (presumably his treatise on the procession of the Holy Spirit: cf. Syropoulos Appendice III 10 [603. 33–604. 4] and III 10 [170. 15–24]). On Kabasilas see also *Oeuvres complètes de Gemade Scholarios*, eds. L. Petit, X.A. Siderides and M. Jugie (Paris 1930) 43.5–48.30 (Olbianos) and p. ix; E. Candal, *Nilus Cabasilas et theologia S. Thomae de Processione Spiritus Sancti* (Rome 1945).

13 John attended only the preliminary sessions.

against the Latins, despite his official appointment, deemed the council a complete waste of time for the Greek delegates.

John's *logos* is an engaging piece of writing, combining, in its narrative portions, an emotional style – which does not mean ‘immediate’, as we shall see – and a highly sophisticated diction. Nonetheless, Byzantinists have largely overlooked its literary characteristics, focusing instead on the *Realien* in John's castaway story. John's adventurous wreckage is primarily mentioned in papers or monographs concerning the technical aspects of seafaring in fifteenth-century Byzantium.¹⁴ The most noteworthy exception is the article published in 1996 by Stauros Kourouses,¹⁵ focusing on the parallels between Synesios' Ep. 5 Garzya¹⁶ and John's *logos*. The analogies are in fact striking, but not surprising. Synesios' *Epistle 5* was drawn upon over and over again by Byzantine travel literature, from late antiquity down to the twelfth century.¹⁷ Moreover Synesios' epistolary collection had become a widespread model for Byzantine letter writing.¹⁸ Cultivated correspondents could easily recognize a quotation and its background even when the author's name was not mentioned. The first epistle in the edition of Eugenikos' collection, published by Lampros in 1923, offers a good and enlightening example. The letter is a sympathetic missive addressed to George Plethon (1, pp. 154–5 Lampros). In encouraging his friend to carry on his political activity in Mistra, John describes Gemistos as a fierce and prudent man, a lone tower buffeted by winds, storms and high swells (155.8–13):

Σὺ δ' εἶ μακάριος ἀληθῶς εἴπερ τις καὶ μακαρίως ζῶν καὶ εὐδαιμόνως καὶ μετ' ἀγαθῶν τῶν ἐλπίδων, κατὰ τὸν εἰπόντα περὶ αὐτοῦ σοφὸν, ὥσπερ ἐν ἱερῷ περιβόλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ, πνευμάτων ἐμβολαῖς καὶ προσρήξει ποταμῶν καὶ πᾶσι πειρασμοῖς, ὡς ἐπὶ τὴν στερρὰν πέτραν τῆς ἀληθινῆς σοφίας τεθεμελιωμένος πύργος, ἀρραγῆς καὶ ἀκλόνητος.

You are truly blessed, yes, more than anyone else, you are living a blessed and happy life full of good hopes, according to the wise man's saying, as if you were in the sacred enclosure of the universe, like a tower built upon the solid rock of

14 Cf. G. Makris, *Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Schifffahrt*, Saggio introduttivo di S. Origone e P. Schreiner (Genoa 1988) 150, 229 f., 242, 270.

15 S. I. Kourouses, 'Μιχαὴλ Ἀποστόλης καὶ Ἰωάννης Εὐγενικός μιμούμενοι τὸν ἐπιστολογράφον Συνέσιον', *Ἀθηνᾶ* 81 (1990–96) 431–41.

16 *Epistolae*, ed. A. Garzya (Rome 1979).

17 See M. E. Mullett, 'In peril on the sea: travel genres and the unexpected', in R. Macrides (ed.), *Travel in the Byzantine world* (Aldershot, Burlington 2002) 259–84. More in general on travel reports see also C. Galatariotou, 'Travel and perception in Byzantium', *DOP* 47 (1993) 221–41.

18 An example – but many more could be mentioned – of Synesios' popularity in an earlier period is provided by Psellos' 'Praise for John Italos' (*Michaelis Pselli Oratoria minora*, ed. A. Littlewood [Leipzig 1985], Or. 19), where he introduces different quotations from Synesios' letter collection (see for instance Ep. 40, p. 51.7 in Or. 19, p. 70. 34 Littlewood or Ep. 56, p. 96.11 in Or. 19, p. 71.43). On Psellos and Heliodoros see now S. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos. Rhetoric and authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge 2013) 92, 98.

true wisdom, unmoved and unshaken, defying the blowing winds, the rushing rivers and all sorts of temptations.

As we can see, John confesses that he borrowed the short phrase ‘living a life full of good hopes, like in a sacred enclosure of the universe’ from a ‘wise man’, without adding further details. The unnamed source was therefore quite familiar to both John and his friend Plethon, part of their shared education, a well known and much-read text. We have here a lovely and unmistakable quotation from Synesios’ Ep. 41 Garzya, actually a long harangue, where the late-antique bishop detailed his life and career, praising intellectual delight and lamenting his political battles (p. 58.3–6):

καὶ ἔζων μετ’ ἀγαθῶν τῶν ἐλπίδων, ὥσπερ ἐν ἱερῷ περιβόλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ, ζῶν ἄφετον ἀνεμμένον, εὐχῇ καὶ βιβλίῳ καὶ θήρᾳ μερίζων τὸν βίον.

And I was living, full of good hopes, as if I were in the sacred enclosure of the universe, a creature free from worldly business and careless, spending my life praying, reading and hunting.

It goes without saying that John here implicitly praises his addressee through a flattering comparison with his literary model, that is to say a Christian, who, just like Plethon, was not ignorant at all of pagan philosophy.¹⁹

So, back to John’s *logos*: in what follows I will not linger on nautical details at all. Quite the contrary, I will concentrate on some literary aspects of John’s travel report, in an attempt better to understand its narrative models and stylistic framework. Against this backdrop, I will also try to account for the place of honour given to Synesios’ Ep. 5 Garzya in John’s *logos* and, still more generally, in Byzantine travel narratives.

From Italy to Greece: subverting Paul’s travels

As the title itself reveals,²⁰ John’s *logos* merges the ὁδοιπορικόν subgenre of travel literature²¹ with a prose hymn of thanksgiving, comparable to other extended prose prayers written by the *nomophylax*.²² For one thing, the *logos* was explicitly meant for an

19 The figure of the pro-Hellenic Synesios constantly struggling – in his years as a bishop – against barbarians was particularly suited to parallel Gemistos’ nostalgic approach to the Greek past. See I. N. Moles, ‘Nationalism in Byzantine Greece’, *GRBS* 10 (1969) 95–107.

20 See 271. Λόγος διαλαμβάνων τὸ κατ’ αὐτὸν ἐξαίσιον παρὰ θεοῦ θαῦμα τῆς τοῦ ἐν θαλάσῃ πικροῦ θανάτου ἀπαλλαγῆς ἀκριβῶς τε πάντη καὶ ἀψευδῶς καὶ εὐχαριστήριος ἐν μέρει (‘A truthful and accurate tale of the portentous and divine miracle through which I escaped a cruel death in the sea, and to some extent a thanksgiving’). Of course the *logos* has also a strong ekphrastic quality (on ekphrasis and narrative see R. Webb, *Ekphrasis, imagination and persuasion in ancient rhetorical theory and practice* [Farnham, Burlington 2009] 62–80; 167–91).

21 See Mullett, ‘In peril’, 260–1.

22 Summarised in Pétridès, ‘Les œuvres’, 112–213. John states that he had promised the *logos* to God, while he was risking his life on sea. He now fulfils his promise (272. 10–12). Not surprisingly the cod. Urbin. 95, containing the first version of the *logos*, also includes a thanksgiving canon addressed to the Theotokos. As far as thanksgiving prose hymns are concerned, see, for the sake of comparison, Demetrius Chrysoloras’ λόγος

oral performance – possibly in church – as John stresses time and again in the introduction.²³ John moreover tries to create a strong bond with his audience from the opening lines of the *logos*. His attempt emotionally to engage his audience is again particularly clear in the last part of the work, where John switches from a more personal ‘I’ to an all-encompassing ‘we’.²⁴ As we shall see, the intermingling of different genres offers a partial explanation for the stylistic features characterizing many sections of the *logos*, which often indulges in reproducing the lengthy prayers uttered by John during the storm.²⁵ On the other hand, though, such an intermingling is motivated precisely by John’s willingness to engage his audience and make them feel the dangers through which he went. John’s *logos*, thus, turns out to be a more challenging piece than it might appear at first sight.²⁶ We do not have any reason to doubt that the shipwreck actually happened and that John actually feared for his own life, seeing death in the eyes of his drowning fellow travellers. And yet, in order to communicate his feelings, John uses, and at times subverts, a well-defined and easily recognizable set of narrative patterns, serving the purpose of orienting his audience toward a correct interpretation and affective consumption of the story.²⁷ Nor shall we forget that John had his own precise political agenda. He regards the ominous sailing back to Constantinople as the cherry on the top of a disastrous political enterprise. His anti-unionist views are constantly implied throughout the *logos* and, we might assume, they must have been all the more clear when, or if, he performed the piece in person.

Continued

εὐχαριστήριος addressed to the Virgin and published by P. Gautier: ‘Action de grâces de Démétrius Chrysoloras à la Théotokos pour l’ anniversaire de la bataille d’Ankara (28 Juillet 1403)’, *REB* 19 (1961) 348–56.

23 See p. 271.4; 271.21, where John mentions his listeners.

24 See p. 311.23 to the end.

25 The opening and final thanksgiving to the Lord: 271.1–274.9 (with references to the Book of Tobit, 12.17–18 [p. 271.2–3]; Gregory of Nazianzus, Or. 39, 9, PG 36, col. 360 [271.6–7]; Luke 10.25–37 [272.16]) and 310.23–314.28 (the last prayer is built as a biblical cento from the Psalms, see, e.g., as far as 310–11 are concerned: Ps. 105.2 [310.28–30]; 76.14–15 [310.30–1]; 11.23–4 [310.31–311.1]; 106.43 [311.1–2]; 146.5 [311.2–3]; 39.6 [311.3–5]; 88.9–10 [311.5–8]; 33.12–13 [311.21–5]; 4.3 [311.26–8]). They represent the extradiegetic framework of the *logos*. The other prayers are intradiegetic, embedded in the report as part of the recounted events.

26 For one thing, it questions our ideas of autobiography and personal authorial voice as much as Constantine Manasses’s ὁδοιπορικόν two centuries earlier, even though the social and historical backgrounds of the two authors are completely different. See Nilsson, ‘La douceur’, 184–5.

27 Highly emotional overtones were deemed typical of eyewitness accounts, as stated for instance in 1186 by Eustathios in *The Capture of Thessalonike* (Eustazio di Tessalonica, *La espugnazione di Tessalonica*, ed. S. Kyriakidis [Palermo 1961] 3.20–6). John seems to abide by the same rules outlined two centuries earlier by Eustathios: surely enough, just like Eustathios, he does not belong to the ‘lay people’ or ‘common people’ (3.23) and, therefore, besides complaining, he goes to some length to safeguard truthfulness, just as recommended by Eustathios (3.24–6). Interestingly enough, Eustathios also makes a distinction between sheer lamentation and thanksgiving.

I will now focus on the main narrative pattern used by John to recount his travel. By looking closer at the outline of his risky sailing, complete with sea storm and subsequent shipwreck, one cannot but remark that John is moving in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul. Resting on the apostolic blueprint, John seems to subvert the characteristic features of the ‘travelling holy man’, which was also one of the most common features in saints’ lives.

In the way he unfolds the ominous events of his journey, the Byzantine diplomat thus blatantly imitates Paul’s sea crossing and wreckage as they are reported in *Acts* 27. The source is explicitly mentioned at 279.6–10:

καὶ γὰρ δὴ καὶ τὸν ἥλιον ἀλίμενόν τε καὶ ἀποτρόπαιον τοῖς ἐν χειμῶνι πλέουσιν ἔλεγον καὶ οἷον ἱστοροῦσιν αἱ Πράξεις τῶν Ἀποστόλων ἐν Μιλήτῳ ναυαγῆσαντι τῷ μεγάλῳ Παύλῳ διθάλασσον, καὶ ἄλλως οὐκ ἀκίνδυνον ἐν οὕτῳ σφόδρα τραχυνομένῳ τῷ πνεύματι.

As a matter of fact, they said that it was a shelterless and ill-omened land for those who were on the sea in a storm, with the sea on both sides, not unlike what is reported in the *Acts of the Apostles* about great Paul’s shipwreck in Miletus, and finally that it was far from safe with such a wind-blowing gale.

Paul’s journey was one of the most common models in Byzantine travel descriptions.²⁸ Nevertheless, in Eugenikos’ case we can detect some uniquely striking (and subtle) allusions. Just like Paul’s travels from Miletos to Malta, John’s ‘tragedy’ is divided into two acts, in a thrilling crescendo of misfortunes,²⁹ anticipated by a prologue of gloomy signs, not to mention the Italian council-city, Ferrara, where John had spent the last months, and whose name suggests bad luck and calamity. With a touch of self-mockery,³⁰ John presents the reader with his longing for a return home, to Constantinople, without sensing that his impromptu and joyful verse-making was in fact the entrée to the impending ill-fated navigation (277.21–4, but cf. also 274.28).³¹

Ἐνθεν τοι σὺν χαρμονῇ τε ἐξήειν, καὶ ἐπεφώνουν ἐπὶ τισὶν ἱάμβον αἴφνης οὐκ ἐπιτηδεύτῳ Φερράρα χαῖρε τῆς ἀρᾶς φερώνυμε.

To my delight, I was leaving, when I suddenly uttered in the presence of some people this badly-timed line: “Fare the well, Ferrara, fare the well, thou and thy fearful name”.

28 See Kourouses, ‘Μιχαὴλ Ἀποστόλης’, 434.

29 See Dimitrukis, ‘Die Rückreise’, 230, n. 5.

30 On irony in Byzantine texts see I. Grigoriades, *Linguistic and literary studies in the Epitome Historion of John Zonaras* (Thessalonike 1998) 133–47; J. N. Ljubarskij, ‘Byzantine irony. The example of Niketas Choniates’, in Angelidi (ed.), *Byzantium Matures*, 287–296 (with earlier literature).

31 John blamed the Greeks for bringing back to ‘Egypt’ the Lord’s vineyard: he felt himself exiled in Italy, sitting on the banks of the Po river as if it were one of the rivers of Babylon (274.10–31, cf. Psalms 80; Isaiah 5.1–7; Psalm 137). This image was part of Byzantine self-perception and had been largely used in reaction to the exile following the fall of Constantinople in 1204 (see Angold, ‘Autobiography and identity’, 39). As to the city – Ferrara – its name is explained by resorting to a paraetymology (‘bringing about a curse’).

All through the *logos*, textual markers help the reader to understand the narrative timing and arrangement.³² Time and again John emphasizes the different passages of his speech. Again we are to do with performative notations, to which John must have resorted to keep the attention of his audience and orient it toward the most salient moments of his narrative.³³ In this case, just like in the *Acts of the Apostles*, the crucial turning point is the passage from the sea storm to the actual shipwreck (293.13–14):

Ὅτε καὶ ἡ τοῦ δευτέρου δράματος ἀρχὴ καὶ συμφορῶν ἄλλων προοίμιον.

And then, it came, the overture of the second act, the prologue, as it were, of all misfortunes.

Furthermore, John, like Paul, exerts his spiritual authority upon the travellers aboard the ship, reassuring them, encouraging them, and praying with them. Actually, at one point, the commander of the ship is even confident that the crew's and the passengers' lives depend on John Eugenikos' own rescue (296.8–297.9).

But again, in John's portrait of himself as a holy man, we can pick out a touch of (self-) irony. On the one hand, despite his attempts and his best will, John has neither the presence nor the bravery of the Apostle. Sometimes he is even unable to accept his destiny with an unshaken heart (282.14–21):

Ἐγὼ δὲ κοίλῃ νηϊ ὑπελθὼν καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς κοίτης ὡς ἔτυχον κατακλιθεὶς, ἥπερ εἰώθειν, αἰὲν τραχυνομένου τοῦ πνεύματος, ἀμέλει καὶ τότε κατὰ μικρὸν αἰρομένου, ἐτεταράγμην τε καὶ ἀπροαιρέτως πῶς αἰσθάνομαι λύπης συχνῆς ἐν καρδίας μυχοῖς καὶ ἅμα κλόνου διὰ παντὸς τοῦ σώματος καὶ τρόμου καὶ στόνου δεινοῦ καὶ παλμοῦ, καίτοι μήτε συχνῆς ἐνούσης ἔτι τῷ ἁερὶ ψυχρότητος κάμοῦ πολλοῖς ἱματίοις καὶ τοῖς ἐν στρωμνῇ δεμνίοις προσέτι περικεκαλυμμένου.

After going down into the hollow ship and immediately lying down on my bed, as I used to do, as the wind was raging, indeed, and even rising little by little, I found myself shaky, suddenly feeling a great pain in the innermost part of my heart, and every part of my body was trembling, shivering, sobbing terribly and beating, although the air was not chilly yet and I was wrapped all around in many clothes and also in the bedding.³⁴

32 Even the day of John's departure is specified: 14 September (277.31–3). For further examples: 278.22–279.14; 279.13–17 (describing the different delays), with Dimitrukas, 'Die Rückreise', 231–2; 238–44. On the censure of foreign lands in Byzantine travel accounts, see also Galatariotou, 'Travel and perception', 226–30.

33 It may be noted that these notations bear a strong resemblance to the paratexts bequeathed by the manuscripts of novels and romances: see F. Conca, 'Scribi e lettori dei romanzi tardo antichi e bizantini', in A. Garzya (ed.), *Metodologie della ricerca sulla tardaantichità*, Atti del Primo Convegno dell'Associazione di Studi Tardoantichi (Naples 1989) 221–46.

34 However, it must be noted that in the most dangerous moment of the storm, John, after recommending himself to the Theotokos, manages to jump from the sinking ship onto the middle of the raft, while he observes with no fear (and almost with no involvement) the more experienced sailors die before his very eyes (292.12–29).

On the other hand, the figure of the commander, the strongest believer in John's holiness, is absolutely unreliable: the λόγος depicts him in a tragicomic way. Once overconfident, rich and prosperous,³⁵ the master of the ship becomes under pressure a humble four-footed animal, a sort of tail-wagging dog (296.8–25):

Ταῦτα ὁρῶν καὶ ἀκούων ἅμα ἔφ' ὁ πρὸ μικροῦ μὲν εὐδαίμων καὶ σοβαρὸς ναύαρχος, τότε δὲ γυμνὸς καὶ δυστυχὴς καὶ περίτρομος, φρίξας ἐκεῖνος καὶ ἐκπλαγεὶς πάντων μάλιστα τὴν ἐμὴν σωτηρίαν καὶ τὸ ἀήθη καθάπαξ ἐν τοιούτοις καὶ ἄπειρον ὄντα μεξὺν ἀμφίοις τοσοῦδε τῷ ἀκατίῳ δυνηθῆναι παραρριφῆναι καὶ τὸ ὅλον θείας ἰσχύος τοῦτο καὶ χάριτος, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπινοίας ἢ μηχανῆς λογισάμενος καὶ νομίσας δι' ἐμὲ κἀκεῖνον ἂν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τὸν θεὸν ἐλεῆσαι καὶ περισῶσαι, καίτοι τοῦναντίον μᾶλλον ἔλεγόν τε καὶ ἐφρόνουν ἐγὼ καὶ νῦν καὶ πρότερον, ὑποσυρεῖς ἄφ' οὗ καθήμενος περὶ πού τὴν πρύμνην ἔτυχε χερσὶ καὶ ποσὶν ἅμα μεταβαίνων τετράποδος βάσιν θηρὸς ὀρεστέρου τιθέμενος ἐπὶ χεῖρα κατ' ἵχνος, ποιητικῶς εἶπεῖν, καὶ ἔγγιστά μοι παραγεγρονῶς κατ' αὐτὸ μάλιστα τοῦ πλοίου τὸ μεσαίτατον, χειρὶ στήθος πλήξας καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ὑποκλίνας, εἶτα καὶ συχνῶς ἐπινεύων μηδ' ὅπως οὖν φωνῆς τι προιέναι τέως τῇ ψύξει δυνάμενος, τῆς δεξιᾶς μου λαβόμενος καὶ ὅλος ὅλον με περιφύς, θερμῶς κατησπάζετο, ὥς ἢ συζήσων ἢ συναποθανούμενός μοι περιπλακεῖς.

When, at daybreak, the master of the ship heard and saw what was going on, he, who just a few minutes before was so happy and arrogant, now stood there naked and unlucky and trembling, and terrified and, above all, astonished to see how I managed to save my life by jumping on the raft with heavy clothes on, even though I was not used to and experienced in those things. So he was convinced that my rescue was all the effect of Divine power, regardless of human skills or inventiveness. He thought that God would have mercy on him and rescue him and the others through my person, even though I said that this would not be the case (this was my opinion at the time and I still believe it). He got up from the raft's prow where he was sitting, and crawled "on all fours, stalking like a wild animal" (*Hecuba* 1058–59), to quote the poet. Then he came close to me in the very middle of the boat, striking his chest, sinking his head and doggedly nodding assent, since he could not say a word, out of despair. At some point he warmly hugged me, clinging and hooking on to me, imagining that he was going to live or die along with me.

As a matter of fact, godly men, just like Paul, were able to calm storms and winds through their prayers (external world), or at least, to calm themselves and accept their misfortunes with neither fears nor tears (inner world). A good example of this latter pattern is provided by the 'novelistic' *Life of Xenophon*.³⁶ The life tells the adventures

35 Cf. 278.13–15; 280.31–281. 1.

36 See L. Rydén, 'Literariness in Byzantine saint's Lives', in P. Odorico and P. A. Agapitos (eds.), *Les vies des Saints à Byzance. Genre littéraire ou biographie historique?* (Paris 2004) 56–8. The pre-metaphrastic

of Xenophon's sons John and Arcadius, who, during a sea journey from Constantinople to Egypt, are separated by a violent storm after losing their ship. Although their prayers do not save them from shipwreck, by accepting their fate John and Arcadius are nonetheless freed from dread and worries, to the extent that they seem to swim lightly among the waves (386.1-12 Galant):

Πνεύσαντος δὲ βιαίου ἀνέμου, ἐκινδύνευε τὸ πλοῖον καταποντισθῆναι οἱ δὲ νέοι πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους ἐπεκαλοῦντο, μετὰ δακρύων τὸν Θεὸν παρακαλοῦντες, καὶ λεγόντες· «Δέσποτα κύριε ἡμῶν, Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, δὸς ἡμῖν βοήθειαν ἐκ θλίψεως, καὶ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοιαύτης ἀνάγκης· μνήσθητι, Κύριε, τὰ ἔργα τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν· καὶ μὴ συναπολέσωμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ τοίου κλύδωνος!» Καὶ περιπλέξαντες ἑαυτούς, ὀδυνηρῶς ἔλεγον· «Σώζου πάτερ, σώζου μητέρα, σώζεσθε δούλοι καὶ φίλοι! ποῦ τὰ πραγματά τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῆς μητρός; πῶς ἢ τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐπίστασις, ποῦ αἱ τῶν μοναχῶν εὐχαί; πάντων εἰς οὐδὲν λογισθήσονται; ἀλλὰ αἱ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαι τὰς τῶν γονέων δικαιοσύνας ἐκάλυψαν· ἀνάξιοι ἐσμεν τοῦ ζῆν». Καὶ ὡς ταῦτα εἰπόντες ἡσύχησαν· καὶ μετὰ μικρὸν διεσκορπίσθη τὸ πλοῖον, καὶ λαβόντες ἕκαστος σκαφιδίου ἔπλεον ὑπὲρ τῶν κυμάτων.

Since the wind began to blow fiercely, the ship was at risk of sinking. The youngsters called upon all the saints, begging in tears for God's help, saying: "Oh Lord, Jesus Christ, free us from affliction. Save us from such a great trouble. Please, Lord, remember the deeds of our fathers. Do not let us perish beneath the waves!" They embraced one another, saying in great sorrow: "Farewell my father, farewell my mother, farewell friends and servants! Where are our father's and mother's deeds? Is that the sense of your orders? Where are the prayers of all the monks? Is it all worth nothing? But our sins have concealed our parent's righteousness: we are not worthy to live." As soon as they pronounced these words, they quieted down. After a few minutes the ship collapsed, so they took a ship's scattered fragment each and floated upon the waves.

On the contrary John, by grotesquely depicting the master's exaggerated hopes and clearly hysterical behaviour (a few pages later the *nauarchos* turns out to be so panic-stricken that he can barely be calmed down),³⁷ undermines his own self-portrait as a travelling holy man.³⁸ After all, the master of the ship has deemed John almighty, but he himself cannot possibly be considered as a trustworthy or authoritative source. The *nomophylax* likewise combines the typical Byzantine self-deprecation with a subtle sense of self-irony.

Continued

version (dating back to the sixth century, was published by Louis Galant: 'De Vitae SS. Xenophontis et socio-rum codicibus florentinis', *AB* 22 [1903] 378-94).

37 Cf. p. 305.28-306.6.

38 See Mullett, 'In peril', 262-3, 266.

The same light touch can be detected in the choice of drawing upon Paul's journey. While Paul, at the end of his journey, was bound to preach in Rome, initiating Italy into the true Faith, John was travelling back to Constantinople, full of revulsion against the western Church, after an abortive and useless ecclesiastical mission. Such a disparity could hardly go unnoticed by contemporary audiences, all the more since John Eugenikos had openly stated the apostolic blueprint.

Overwhelmed by a hurricane of words

I will now focus on the stylistic features of the *logos*. In view both of John's own explicit statements and of the rhythm of his prose, two details strike the reader going through the extensive shipwreck narrative.

First, John repeatedly points out that his travel report is something more than a plain, discursive form of narration, or account, i.e. διήγησις.³⁹ In describing his unfortunate journey, John stages a veritable drama – a tragedy: 'Who could report what happened thereafter, or to say it more properly, who could suitably stage the tragedy of such a great misfortune?'⁴⁰ (283.3–4 and cf. also 287.6). A page earlier John explicitly states that his story is imbued with tragic echoes (281. 32 and cf. above the quotation from Euripides' *Hecuba*). Moreover, he overtly confesses that, just when the gale was raging, his mind (imitating Synesios' 'philological' attitude)⁴¹ flew to Homer's storms, concocting a sort of shipwreck *cento* out of fragments from the *Odyssey* (281.30–232.8):

ἐπὶ δὲ μέσης νυκτὸς οὐκέτι ξὺν μειδιάματι ὁ ὕμνος καὶ χαρμονῇ, ἀλλὰ σὺν δάκρυσιν καὶ ὀλοφυρμῷ ὁμμάτων τ' ἄπο φόνου σταλαγμοῖς τραγωδικῶς εἶπεῖν, ἥνικ' ἀτεχνῶς ἡμῖν οἶα Ὅμηρος ἐπ' Ὀδυσσεῖ ποιεῖ ξυνηνέχθη. Καὶ γὰρ θεὸς «ξυνάγαγε νεφέλας, ἐτάραξε δὲ πόντον, πάσας δ' ὀρόθυνεν ἀέλλας παντοίων ἀνέμων, σὺν δὲ νεφέεσσιν κάλυψε γαῖαν ὁμοῦ καὶ πόντον· ὄρωρε δ' οὐρανὸς τε νύξ· σὺν δ' εὐρὸς τε νότος τ' ἔπεσον ζέφυρός τε δυσαῆς καὶ βορέης αἰθρηγενέτης μέγα κῦμα κυλίνδων· ναῦν δ' ἐφόρει μέγα κῦμα κατὰ ῥόον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα οἱ δ' ὥς τ' ἐν πεδίῳ τετράοροι ἄρσενες ἵπποι ὑψόσ' ἀειρόμενοι ῥίμφα πρήσσουσι κέλευθον ὥς ἄρα τῆς πρύμνης μὲν ἀεῖρετο κῦμα δ' ὀπισθεν πορφύρεον μέγα θῦε πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης».

39 On this narrative mode in the light of the rhetorical theories, see P.A. Agapitos, *Narrative structure in the Byzantine vernacular romances. A textual and literary study of Kallimachos, Belthandros and Libistros* (Munich 1991) 144–59. See also J. R. Morgan, 'Make-believe and make believe: the fictionality of the Greek novel', in G. Gill and T. P. Wiseman (eds.), *Lies and fiction in the ancient world* (Austin 1993) 186–97. Descriptions of shipwrecks were deemed so vivid and touching that the narrator finds himself unable to express his feelings fully and to recount the events properly. See, for instance, Theodoros Daphnopates, *Correspondence*, ed. J. Darrouzès and L. G. Westerink (Paris 1978) 199, Ep. 36, 4–5: Τὸ δὲ ἐστίν, οἶμαι, παντὸς ἐπέκεινα διηγήματος ('The subject matter goes, I think, beyond any story').

40 Τὰ δ' ἐντεῦθεν τίς ἂν διηγῆσαιο, μᾶλλον δὲ τίς ἀξίως τὴν συμφορὰν ἐκείνην ἐκτραγωδήσειε;

41 See *Epistolae*, ed. A. Garzya (Rome 1979) ep. 5, 16, 19–17, 18. In the letter describing his stormy journey, Synesios depicts himself as racking his brain over questions of Homeric exegesis.

Yet, in the middle of the night we stopped singing our hymns with joy and delight. There were tears and screams instead and “blood drops from our eyes” (*Hecuba* 240–1), to say it tragically, when exactly what Homer tells about Odysseus happened to us (*Od.* 5.291; 292–6; 327; 13.81; 83–5):⁴² a God gathered the clouds, and troubled the sea, and roused all blasts of all manner of winds, and hid with clouds land and sea alike, and night rushed down from heaven; together the East Wind and the South Wind dashed, and the fierce-blowing West Wind and the North Wind, born in the bright heaven, rolling before him a mighty wave; and a great wave ever bore it this way and that along its course. And as on a plain four yoked stallions spring forward, even so the stern of that ship leapt on high and in her wake the dark wave of the loud-sounding sea foamed mightily.

Second, when describing the sea storm, John steers clear of his typically hypotactic and convoluted style,⁴³ in favour of parataxis, short, symmetrical *cola*, parallelisms, near rhymes, homoiotota, assonances etc. The result is a bombastic and strongly mimetic style, which tries to imitate the raging sea (308.21: τοῖς τῶν κυμάτων ὄγκοις),⁴⁴ the rolling waves, the heavily swinging ship, and the pangs of fear. John thus manages to provide an impressionistic depiction of the shipwreck, one that, through quick brushstrokes, communicates the anguish that anyone would experience during a life-threatening storm. Among the many examples, I can mention:

- 1) Emotional involvement. Isocolon, anaphora, alliteration, polysyndeton, to underline the tension caused by the vivid recollection of the events: κἄν ἱλιγγιῶ πρὸς τὴν μνήμην, κἄν ταράττωμαι, κἄν φρίττω, κἄν τρέμω, κἄν λόγος οὐδεὶς ἀξίως παραστήσῃ τὸ πάθος (Although my head spins when I remember, although I shiver, although I shudder, and no word can depict properly such a great sufferance: 283.18–20).
- 2) Confusion on board. Homoteleuta, onomatopoeia, alliteration, polyptoton, rhymes, to describe what happened on board and phonically suggest the ‘sounds of fear’: Ἐπὶ τὰ δεξιὰ, ἔνθα καὶ πρὶν ἀεὶ μικρὸν τι προσεπεκεκλίκει, κατερράγη, καὶ ἅμα βοή τις βροντώδης καὶ θροῦς ἐξαίσιος οἶόν τις σεισμὸς οἰκουμένης ἢ ῥῆξις γῆς ἢ παγκόσμιος σύγχυσις ἢ τοῦ παντὸς ἀνατροπὴ καὶ κατάλυσις ἐξερράγη, πάντων ὁμοῦ συμφώνως ἐμψύχων, ἀψύχων, ἠχησάντων δεινῶς (The ship collapsed on the right, to which side it had already been bending beforehand, if only slightly, and then, a clamor broke off, like a thunder, a portentous noise, like an earthquake, or a crack in the soil: it

42 John adds a θεός to v. 5.291, deliberately omits the ‘anthropomorphic’ mention of Poseidon’s hands at v. 5.292, makes explicit the term ναῦς at v. 5.327, changes ἡ δ’ in οἱ δ’ at v. 13.82, and leaves out v. 13.82.

43 The lengthy clauses that John uses in the logos could fall under the label of ‘brilliance’ (λαμπρότης) (*Types of style*, pp. 264.5–269.9 Rabe) or «abundance» (περιβολή) (pp. 277.21–296.3 Rabe).

44 On the rhetorical significance of ὄγκος (the term can describe both the raging waves and a grandiloquent style), see A. I. Stone, ‘On Hermogenes’s features of style and other factors affecting style in the panegyrics of Eustathios of Thessaloniki’, *Rhetorica* 19/3 (2001) 307–39. On the connection between ὄγκος and tragic style, see A. Pizzone, *Sinesio e la sacra ancora di Omero. Intertestualità e modelli tra retorica e filosofia* (Milan 2006) 106–10.

was as if the world went upside down, back to the chaos, back to dissolution. And at that point, everything, animate or not, was screaming dreadfully: 289.28–32); Double polyptoton, chiasmus, to evoke the exceptional reversal of the natural order: Ἀνεφαίνετο μὲν τὸ κρυπτόμενον, τὸ φαινόμενον δὲ ὑπεκρύπτετο (What was obscure became conspicuous, and what was conspicuous became obscure: 290.14–15).

- 3) The raging nature surrounding the ship. Repeated anaphora to depict the overwhelming water-world overboard: Πάντα ἦν ὕδωρ ἀπανταχοῦ, ὡς τοῦ κόσμου τότε παντὸς εἶπες ἂν εἰς ὕδωρ μόνον ἀποκριθέντος. Ὑδωρ μὲν ἄνωθεν ἐκ νεφῶν, ὕδωρ δὲ κάτωθεν ἐκ θαλάττης, ὕδωρ δὲ δακρύων ἐξ ὀφθαλμῶν. Ὑδωρ δὴ περὶ ἡμᾶς, ὕδωρ μὲν ἐντός, ὕδωρ δὲ ἐκτός (It was all water everywhere, and you could have said that the world was nothing but water. Water falling from the clouds, water up from the sea, and water from the tears of our eyes. Water all around us, water inside, water outside: 295.4–8).

To sum up, in depicting the climax of his ill-fated journey, John opts for a grand style full of Homeric references, such as had been outlined many centuries before in the treatise *On forceful speaking* ascribed to Hermogenes (33, p. 450.1–19. Rabe, ‘tragic elocution’):

Τὸ τραγικῶς λέγειν Ὅμηρος μὲν ἐδίδαξε, Δημοσθένης δὲ ἐμιμήσατο. ὅτι μὲν γὰρ τραγῳδὸς καὶ πατήρ τραγωδίας Ὅμηρος, Πλάτων μαρτυρεῖ· ὅπως δ’ ἐτραγώδησεν ἐν τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ποιήσει, θεωρητέον (...) τὰ μεγάλα τῇ βραχύτητι τῆς ἐρμηνείας φυλάττει μεγάλα, τῆς συντομίας τὸ μέγεθος αὐτοῖς διασφραδίζουσης, τὰ δὲ μικρὰ καὶ φαῦλα τῇ περιβολῇ τῶν λόγων μέγεθος προσλαμβάνει.

Homer taught how to speak tragically, and Demosthenes imitated him. Plato testifies that Homer was a tragedian and the father of tragedy. But one must examine how he made his poetry tragic (...). Great things remain great, even if one adopts a succinct style, because concision safeguards their greatness; on the other hand, through amplification, one dignifies minor and trivial subjects.

When describing the tragic mode of speaking, Ps. Hermogenes also adds an example taken from Demosthenes⁴⁵ and the technique is the same as the one we can find in John’s *logos* (33, pp. 450.20–451.3 Rabe):

Ταῦτά ποιεῖ Δημοσθένης καὶ οὕτω τραγωδεῖ Φωκέων ἄλωσιν ἔθνους ὅλου ἐν ὀλίγοις ῥήμασι λέγων «ἦν ἰδεῖν οἰκίας κατεσκαμμένας, τεῖχη περιηρημένα, χώραν ἔρημον τῶν ἐν ἡλικίᾳ, γυναῖκα δὲ καὶ παιδιάρια ὀλίγα καὶ πρεσβύτας ἀνθρώπους οἰκτρούς».

Demosthenes does the same and in a few words he tragically depicts the sack of the Phocians, a whole people, saying, “It was possible to see houses demolished, walls dismantled, the entire country empty of men in their prime, only a few women and children and pitiable old men”.

As we have mentioned, a thousand years before John Eugenikos lifted anchor from Venice, Synesios in Epistle 5, addressed to his brother Evoptios, had taken advantage of these very same rhetorical devices to describe his own wretched navigation from Constantinople to Alexandria. The future bishop of Ptolemais explicitly reveals his stylistic choice in different passages of the letter.

First, when it comes to the description of the raging sea, he states that he had to choose his words carefully, in order not to spoil his subject matter, or to put it in Ps. Hermogenes' words, in order to 'preserve its grandeur' (Ep. 5, 16.6–8):

ἔδει γάρ μοι καὶ φλεγμαινόντων ὀνομάτων, ἵνα μὴ τὰ μεγάλα κακὰ μικροπρεπέστερον διηγῆσμαι.

I needed flamboyant⁴⁶ words, lest I produce a bad story, undermining my magnificent subject.

Now, ancient rhetorical theory connected the kind of 'flamboyant words' employed by Synesios to dithyramb, as can be seen, for instance, in Philostratus, who ascribes to Apollonius a manner of speaking devoid of poetic and embroidered words (οὐ διθυραμβώδη καὶ φλεγμαίνουσαν ποιητικοῖς ὀνόμασιν).⁴⁷ As a matter of fact, διθυραμβική φράσις was deemed a development of the Gorgian style and had therefore been strongly condemned by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Pompeus* 2, 13). In Byzantine times, John of Sicily in his influential commentary on Hermogenes' work had dwelled on this sort of stylistic 'degeneration' (102.17–103.12 Walz). What is more, in his treatise *De insomniis* Synesios himself links 'flamboyant words', φλεγμαίνοντα ὀνόματα, to a degraded variety of style, one that he tries by all means to steer clear of.⁴⁸

Second, Synesios openly declares that the letter narrates a δρᾶμα, by recounting tragi-comic deeds. He also acknowledges that he attuned the epistle to the shape that God had given to the events.⁴⁹ In doing so, he is aware that his account breaks the golden mean-rule, going beyond the limits of letter writing.⁵⁰

At a closer look, the popularity enjoyed by the epistle of Synesios – a model for so many Byzantine travel accounts, mostly epistolary – is somewhat ironic. Synesios' letter is in fact a parody. Overtly breaking the norms of σαφήνεια and describing his letter as a δρᾶμα, the future bishop of Ptolemais performs a tragicomic tour de force and mockingly exploits all the resources offered by the διθυραμβική φράσις.⁵¹ His self-portrait as a stubborn Homerist, who cannot do without the poems, even in the middle of a dreadful sea storm, is also to be read as self-mockery rather than self-praise. What is more, Synesios

46 A few lines before, Synesios uses the baroque image of the sea fighting against itself (16. 2–3).

47 *Vita Apollonii* 1, 17.

48 14, 148b, p. 175. 5.

49 Ep. 5, 25.10–11, cf. 14, 6, referring to the attitude of the captain.

50 Ep. 5, 25, 11–12.

51 Moreover, in the letter the Homeric poems are also labelled as δρᾶμα (see Ep. 5, 17, 14 with Pizzone, *La sacra ancora*, 103–6).

transformed his epistle to Evoptios into the caricature of a novel scene, a fact that fully accounts for the author's emphasis on its 'dramatic' features.⁵²

As I have tried to outline, sophisticated literary criticism in Greco-Roman times frowned upon the swollen theatrical style employed by Synesios. Nevertheless, in Byzantine literary production such a style was fully acceptable in fictional narratives; more in general the use of phonetically 'mimetic words' was crucial to rhetorical performance and the 'staging' of rhetorical prowess.⁵³ In the eleventh century Michael Psellos considered the mimetic and melodramatic diction one of the main features of Achilles Tatius' work, most appreciated by the authors of the novels of the Comnenian revival. Psellos describes this kind of style in a way that brings to mind Synesios' φλεγμαίνοντα ὀνόματα (95.69–96.74 Dyck):⁵⁴

μη γάρ τοι φροντίσας μεγαλοπρεπείας σαφέστερος μὲν διὰ τὴν ἔκπτωσιν γέγονεν, ἡδύτερος δὲ διὰ τὴν λέξιν, δημοτικωτάτην οὖσαν καὶ θεατρικωτάτην παντάπασι. αἱ γέ τοι πλείους τῶν ἀκοῶν οὐ διότι στωμύλλεται τὰ συγγράμματα ἀγαπῶσιν, ἀλλ' ἦν διαχέωσιν αὐτάς, αἱ τῶν λέξεων ἡδοναὶ κατακόρως ἀσπάζονται.

As he is not aspiring to grandeur, he is clearer because of the lack (of that ideal) and more pleasing because of his diction, which is vulgar⁵⁵ and theatrical to the highest degree. Most hearers do not love stories because of their verbal cleverness; the fact is that what is pleasurable in language receives a warm welcome if it relaxes the hearer.

52 On the novel as drama see also P. Agapitos, 'Narrative, rhetoric, and drama rediscovered: scholars and poets in Byzantium interpret Heliodoros', in R. Hunter (ed.), *Studies in Heliodoros* (Cambridge 1998) 125–56; Id., 'Ἀπὸ τὸ "δρῆμα" τοῦ Ἔρωτα στὸ "ἀφήγημα" τῆς Ἀγάπης: Τὸ ἐρωτικὸ μυθιστόρημα στὸ Βυζάντιο (11^{ος}/12^{ος} αἰῶνας)', in Angelidi (ed.), *Byzantium Matures*, 53–72. In Synesios' epistle we can recognize many features typical for 'seafaring' novel scenes. Precisely as it happens in Achilles Tatius (love discourses on board: 2, 35 ff; Melite trying to seduce Clitophon, while sharing the same cabin: 5, 15 ff.), Synesios describes the ship as a place of possible licentiousness, given the close cohabitation of men and women (12.20–13.7). Moreover, in depicting the raging sea, Synesios characteristically mentions τρικυμία (16.2), i.e. frightening threefold waves, brought up also by Achilles Tatius (3, 2.5) and Heliodoros (5, 27.7). Achilles Tatius' passage is particularly significant. Synesios introduces 'threefold waves' as a signal of the approaching end (15, 19–16, 3): 'We begged him not to give up our last hopes; as a matter of fact huge waves, rolling in groups of three, were swelling all over the sea, which seemed to fight against itself' (ἐλιπαροῦμεν μὴ καταπροέσθαι μηδέπω τὰς ἐσχάτας ἐλπίδας· καὶ γὰρ δὴ καὶ ἐπεῖχον αἱ τρικυμῖαι, τοῦ πελάγους καὶ πρὸς ἐναντὶ στασιάσαντος). Likewise writes Achilles (3, 2.4–5): 'And there we waited, trusting to fate but giving up all hope. Great, threefold waves came from every side; some from the bow, some dashed against one another at the ship's stern' (ἐμένομεν, παραδόντες ἑαυτοὺς τῇ τύχῃ, ῥίψαντες τὰς ἐλπίδας. Τρικυμῖαι δὲ πολλαὶ πάντοθεν, αἱ μὲν κατὰ πρόσωπον, αἱ δὲ κατ' οὐρὰν τῆς νεῶς ἀλλήλαις ἀντέπιπτον).

53 See M. Bourbouhakis, 'Rhetoric and performance', in P. Stephenson (ed.), *The Byzantine world* (New York 2011) 175–6.

54 Michael Psellos, *The essay on Euripides and George of Pisidia and on Heliodoros and Achilles Tatius*, ed. A. Dyck (Vienna 1986).

55 In Dionysius of Halicarnassus διθυραμβώδη and φορτικά are synonyms (See *Dem.* V 5–7 with Pizzone, *Sacra ancora*, 108).

What is more, Psellos declares that Heliodoros' language, though not theatrical,⁵⁶ is not so distant from Demosthenes' public speeches – and, as we have seen, Demosthenes was considered an example of tragic style. In Psellos' assessment there is also a possible allusion to the 'dithyrambic' manner, in that he mentions the 'bacchic thyrsus', inspiring Heliodoros' diction.⁵⁷

Thus, back to Synesios' Ep. 5, we have to look at it as a piece of writing situated at the crossroads between genres, explicitly merging epistolary 'autobiography',⁵⁸ and novelistic stylistic features. It represents a temporary breakage of the rules of Atticism and clarity upheld in his usual statements on style. What was bound to become a standard for travel writing during Byzantine times was actually, in itself, the subversion of an established model for letter writing. On the other hand, such an unconventional and baroque style turned out to be immensely appealing to Greek medieval audiences.⁵⁹ This is one of the reasons why Synesios' humorous report became so renowned through the centuries, spurring reverberations and garnering imitations for more than a thousand years after he penned it.

The kind of parallelisms, isocola and figures of speech we have detected in John Eugenikos' *logos* are frequent in many fictional accounts of sea-storms or shipwrecks. Among the several examples I could adduce, one of the most representative is provided by Theodoros Prodromos, who resorts again to parataxis, polypotota, homoioteleuta, onomatopoeia, rhyme to depict a tragic shipwreck (*Rodanthe and Dosikles*, 6.214–20):⁶⁰

ὁ μὲν Ποσειδῶν ἠρέθιζε τὸν Νότον,
τὸν πόντον ἀντήγειρεν ὁ θρασὺς Νότος,
τὰς ναῦς ὁ πόντος, αἱ δὲ ναῦς τοὺς ἐν μέσῳ·

56 Psellos, ed. Dyck, 91.14.

57 Psellos, ed. Dyck, 95.59–61. On Heliodoros' mimetic style see J. R. Morgan, 'Readers and audiences in the 'Ethiopian History' of Heliodoros', in H. Hofmann (ed.), *Groningen Colloquia on the Ancient Novel*, IV (Groningen 1991) 90.

58 On epistolography and autobiography see Mullett, *Theophylact*; M. Ludolph, *Epistolographie und Selbstdarstellung. Untersuchungen zu den 'Paradebriefen' Plinius des Jüngeren* (Munich 1997); N. McLynn, 'Gregory Nazianzen's Basil: The literary construction of a Christian friendship', *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001) 178–93; A. Riehle, 'Epistolography as autobiography: remarks on the letter-collections of Nikephoros Choumnos', *Παρεκβολαί* 2 (2012) 1–22.

59 Shipwrecks and storm descriptions were envisaged as the most characteristic features of fictional love narratives. Κλυδῶνων οἶδματα and κλύδωνες are mentioned both in Theodoros Prodromos' dedicatory verses to his own novel (Epigr. Ded. 3, 3) and in the hypothesis of Drosilla and Charikles (Hyp. 2) included in the manuscript Paris. Gr. 2908 (see E. M. Jeffreys, *The novels of mid-twelfth century Constantinople: the literary and social context*, in I. Ševčenko and I. Hutter [eds.], *AETOS. Studies in honour of Cyril Mango* (Stuttgart, Leipzig 1998) 191–9; ead., 'A date for Rodanthe and Dosikles?', in P. A. Agapitos and R. D. Reinsch [eds.], *Der Roman im Byzanz der Komnenenzeit. Ein internationales Symposium* (Wiesbaden 2000) 127–36; A. P. Agapitos, 'Poets and painters: Theodoros Prodromos' dedicatory verses of his novel to an anonymous caesar', *JÖB* 50 [2000] 175–7).

60 Who in turn imitates Synesios: see Kuruses, *Μιχαὴλ Ἀποστόλης*, 441.

κλύδωνα κοινὸν καὶ ζάλην εἶχον μίαν
οἱ ναυλοχοῦντες, ἡ θάλασσα, τὰ σκάφη.
ἐπεβρυχᾶτο τῆς θαλάσσης τὸ στόμα·
ἀντεβρυχᾶτο τῶν πλεόντων τὸ στόμα.

Poseidon excited the south wind.

And the cruel south wind in turn stirred the sea,
and the sea stirred the ships, and the ships the passengers;
the passengers, the sea, the skiff, they shared
a common wave and a single gale.
The mouth of the sea was growling,
and the mouths of the sailing men were growling back.

Theodoros rests here on Achilles Tatius 3. 2, but, taking advantage of the short verse units, he manages to concentrate all the rhetorical devices in a few lines, increasing the dramatic effect of the text: the repeated *polyptoton*, for instance, creates the effect of a chain of words, coming one after the other, precisely like the stormy waves dashing against the ship.

More to the point, John Eugenikos was well aware of the ‘dithyrambic turn’ concealed in novelistic writing. As a matter of fact, in his *προθεωρία* to the *Ethiopian tales*,⁶¹ echoing Photios and Psellos,⁶² he praises Heliodoros’ style and his description of the novelist’s prose sounds indeed very familiar to the reader of the *logos*:⁶³

ἔτι δὲ ἐπῶν ῥῳδῆς καὶ παρίσων/ ἔστι οὗ καὶ ὁμοιοτελεύτων καὶ ὅλως παντοίων τοῦ λόγου/σχημάτων οὐκ ἄμοιρεῖ.

There are many poetic words and exactly balanced clauses, and homoioteleuta and all sorts of figures of speech.

In the end, it seems most likely that John was conscious of the ‘subversive’ character of Synesios’ Ep. 5. That is why he plays the same card as the late antique author by pointing out to his readers that they had to expect a gripping tale, written in a ‘dramatic’ style, rather than a linear, plain report. In thus writing he cunningly superimposes truth and literary echoes according to the typical novelistic alternation between *μῦθος* and *λόγος*.⁶⁴

61 On John’s *protheoria*, see H. Gärtner, ‘Johannes Eugenikos Protheoria zu Heliodoros Aithiopika’, *BZ* 64/2 (1971) 322–5; N. G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London 1983) 272; J. R. Morgan, ‘Heliodoros’, in G. Schmeling (ed.), *The Novel in the Ancient World* (Leiden, New York, Cologne 1996) 423 (see A. M. Bandini, *Catalogus codicum Graecorum Bibl. Laurentianae* [Florence 1770, then Leipzig 1961] III 322–3).

62 Gärtner, *Johannes Eugenikos*, 323.

63 See vv. 14–16. As to the description of the novel as ‘δρᾶμα’, see v. 2; 9; 27.

64 See for instance Callirhoe’s report of her own misfortunes in Achilles Tatius’ novel (5. 5.2–3 and 5. 8.2), playing with the opposition *μῦθος/λόγος*. A later example is provided by Calasiris’ character in Heliodoros’ tale, mirroring the ‘unreliable’ authorial voice (see J.J. Winkler, ‘The mendacity of Kalasiris and the narrative strategy of Heliodoros’ *Aithiopika*’, *Yale Classical Studies* 27 [1982] 93–158). Regarding the Byzantine novel

Yet, the fictional narrator usually pretends to tell a true story, trying to make reliable what is in fact nothing more than an illusion. John, on the contrary, relates his own autobiographical experience in a way that makes it almost too ‘dramatic’ to be true. John stages his own adventure by adopting an ‘aesthetic of display’, bound to hook his audience. This is a very important point. The style of the *logos* in its more narrative parts, the emphasis put by the author on both drama and accurate autobiography,⁶⁵ the recurring presence of rhymes and near rhymes,⁶⁶ as well as of onomatopoeia, makes it clear that John did not only want to instruct his listeners on God’s infinite mercy; he wanted to engage them – if not overtly please.

In other words, while thanking God for saving his life, John ends up making a novel – in the Byzantine sense of the term – out of a harrowing portion of his earthly journey, reshaping and staging himself as the hero of his own life-story.

Continued

of the twelfth-century revival, see for instance Eumathios Makrembolites’ *Hysmine and Hysminias* 8.14.1 where Hysminias’ life experience is qualified as τραγώδημα. On tragic models in Hysmine and Hysminias see I. Nilsson, *Erotic pathos, rhetorical pleasure: narrative technique and mimesis in Eumathios Makrembolites’ Hysmine & Hysminias* (Uppsala 2001) 224–7.

65 Cf. 272. 25–32; 274.14–15.

66 Eustathios provides an enlightening description of the impact of such figures on the listeners, who were expected to be pleased and relieved even when the subject matter was tearful (*Commentary on the Iliad* 4.904. 9–10 Van der Valk): Ὅρα δὲ ὅτι, εἰ καὶ ὁ λόγος πένθος δηλοῖ, ἀλλ’ ὁ ἀκροατῆς διαχέεται τοῖς παρίσις τῷ γόοιο καὶ ἡελίοιο (‘Consider that the listener is delighted by the rhyme γόοιο and ἡελίοιο, even though the discourse points to sorrow’). Διαχέομαι emphasizes a purely aesthetic enjoyment, one that triggers very strong reactions of pleasure.

Memoirs, confessions and apologies: the last chapter of Byzantine autobiography

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Two issues are addressed here: the status of Byzantine autobiography and the state of Byzantine literary culture in its last years. Autobiographical information was mostly a device used at all levels of Byzantine literature for immediacy, emphasis and to suggest personal involvement. It continued to function in this way in the last years of Byzantium, but there was also a degree of experimentation, as it extended its range into satire and comedy and, in the hands of Theodore Agallianos evolved from the rhetoric of apologia into fully-fledged autobiography.

I

Gervase Mathew's dictum: 'Byzantine civilization was never more fertile than when it was destroyed' has always been treated with a fair measure of scepticism.¹ However, if literature is one of the tests of a civilization, then Byzantium in its last phase was doing remarkably well. Because of the emphasis there has always been on the historians of the fall, it is easy to forget the variety of other works of literature produced in Byzantium's closing years: satire in the shape of *Mazaris*² and comedy in that of *Katablattas*, for example.³ Scholars are only now beginning to appreciate that Silvester Syropoulos' *Memoir* of the Council of Florence ranks among the great works of Byzantine history.⁴ What is striking is the use made in these works of autobiographical information, which is also the case with the historical narrative of George Sphrantzes.⁵ The appearance ten years after the fall of Constantinople of a detailed autobiography by one of

1 G. Mathew, *Byzantine Aesthetics* (London 1963) 141.

2 *Mazaris' Journey to Hades*, ed. and trans. A. Smithies *et al.* [Arethusa Monographs, 5] (Buffalo NY, 1975) (hereafter *Mazaris*).

3 P. Canivet and N. Oikonomidès, (*Jean Argyropoulos*) *La Comédie de Katablattas. Invective byzantine du XVe s* (Athens 1982–83) (hereafter *Katablattas*).

4 V. Laurent, *Les "Mémoires" de Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le concile de Florence (1438–1439)* (Paris 1971) (hereafter *Syropoulos*).

5 Giorgio Sfranze, *Cronaca*, ed. R. Maisano [CFHB ser. Italica, 29] (Rome 1990) (hereafter *Sphrantzes*).

the survivors, Theodore Agallianos, is therefore not quite the anomaly it appears to be at first sight.⁶

Thanks to Martin Hinterberger we now know that in one form or another autobiography was a perennial feature of Byzantine literature.⁷ His first task was to meet the need for a working definition of autobiography in a Byzantine context. His solution was brilliantly simple: autobiography was any first-person narrative. At a stroke autobiography lost its mystique, as a guide to the human condition, or as a vindication of the individual, or, as A.P. Kazhdan would have it, as a symptom of the emergence of a 'new anthropocentric awareness'.⁸ It ceased to be so much a literary genre — potential or otherwise — as a literary device, to be used as the occasion or the inclination of the author required. In other words, autobiography at Byzantium had to adapt to prevailing literary fashions rather than existing as a distinct literary form. But its importance is rather greater than this suggests. Ruth Macrides has shown that from the eleventh century an autobiographical slant was a distinctive feature of much Byzantine historiography.⁹ Nothing exemplifies this better than the memoirs, which the ex-Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1347–54) completed in December 1369. However, he used them in order to exonerate himself from blame for the dire state of the Byzantine empire.¹⁰ This work typifies the way that autobiography was increasingly becoming a vehicle for apology. Indeed, a few years earlier Demetrios Kydones had taken the more radical step of reviving the *apologia* in order to defend his decision to convert to Rome, which was inspired by his discovery of the theology of Thomas Aquinas.¹¹ It pointed to the way that autobiography was adapting itself to a wider range of literary forms.

Byzantine autobiography could also take non-literary form. From the late eleventh to the early fourteenth century there are a number of autobiographical prefaces to the

6 K. G. Patrinelis, *Ὁ Θεόδωρος Ἀγαλλιανὸς ταυτιζόμενος πρὸς τὸν Θεοφάνην Μηδείας καὶ οἱ ἀνέκδοτοι λόγοι του* (Athens: privately printed, 1966) (hereafter Agallianos). For a list of his works, see now M.-H. Blanchet, 'Bilan des études sur Théodore Agallianos', *Ὁ Ἐπαριστὴς* 28 (2011) 25–48.

7 M. Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz* [Wiener Byzantinische Studien, 22] (Vienna 1999).

8 A.P. Kazhdan and A.W. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1985) 230.

9 R.J. Macrides, 'The historian in the History', in *ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝ. Studies in honour of Robert Browning*, ed. C.N. Constantinides *et al.* (Venice 1996) 205–24.

10 A.P. Kazhdan, 'L'histoire de Cantacuzène en tant qu'oeuvre littéraire', *B* 50 (1980) 279–335; contra D. M. Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor: a biography of John Cantacuzene, Byzantine emperor and monk, c.1295–1383* (Cambridge 1996) 162, 167–9.

11 G. Mercati, *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Caleca e Teodoro Meliteniota ed altri appunti per la storia della teologia e della letteratura bizantina del secolo XIV* [Studi e Testi 56] (Vatican 1931) 359–403; F. Kianka, 'The Apology of Demetrius Kydones', *Byzantine Studies/Études Byzantines* 7 (1980) 57–71; J.R. Ryder, *The Career and Writings of Demetrius Kydones: a study of fourteenth-century Byzantine politics, religion and society* [Medieval Mediterranean, 85] (Leiden 2010) 13–15, 44–6, 84–5, 197–205.

collected works of scholars and to monastic *typika*.¹² An important addition to this class of document is the confession of Paul Tagaris Palaiologos, sometime acting Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem and Latin Patriarch of Constantinople. It was recorded by the clerks of the patriarchal chancery, as Tagaris made his confession in 1394 to the Patriarch Antony at a sitting of the patriarchal synod.¹³ It provides a reasonably full account of his life. In this it is quite different from other confessions preserved in the Patriarchal Register, which are somewhat perfunctory. It charts his disgraceful progress from Constantinople to Jerusalem and finally to Rome. Tagaris' confession reveals far more at a personal level than more elaborate autobiographical accounts from Byzantium. He was a failure, who was unable to live up to the example of his father, the heroic defender of Philadelphia, Byzantium's last outpost in Anatolia; he was a disappointment to his wife, who abandoned the marital bed to find her pleasures elsewhere. He sought compensation 'through imposture and deception... and through empty and vain display.' (πρὸς ὑπόκρισιν καὶ πανουργίαν ...καὶ πρὸς κενὴν καὶ ματαίαν ἐπίδειξιν).¹⁴ Among the things which appealed to him about being a patriarch were the gorgeous vestments it entitled him to wear. Tagaris was an opportunist, whose career was set against the deep crisis, which Byzantium experienced at the end of the fourteenth century. That it survived was entirely due to the unexpected intervention in 1402 of a central Asian conqueror Tamerlane in the affairs of Asia Minor. The Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos was able to return to his capital, where he set about restoring the moribund fabric of his empire. This was Byzantium's last *Renovatio*; comparable in its way to what happened after the recovery of Constantinople in 1261 by Michael VIII Palaiologos. In both there was a strong cultural component fostered by the imperial court. It is reflected in the literature produced after 1402, which recovered much of the balance and élan lost in the late fourteenth century.

II

A distinctive feature was the deployment of autobiographical information, as a way of injecting a personal slant on events. This had long been a feature of Byzantine historiography, but George Sphrantzes took it a stage further by building his narrative around his own experience, so much so that it becomes almost impossible to categorize: was it history, journal, memoirs, or autobiography? It contained elements of all of these, without being any of them. The best guide to what it was remains the title Sphrantzes

12 M.J. Angold, 'Were Byzantine monastic *typika* literature?', in R. Beaton and Ch. Roueché, eds., *The Making of Byzantine History: Studies dedicated to Donald M. Nicol* (Aldershot 1993) 46–70; M.J. Angold, 'The autobiographical impulse in Byzantium', *DOP* 52 (1998) 225–57.

13 F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata medii aevi sacra et profana* (Vienna 1861) II, 224–30; D. M. Nicol, 'The confessions of a bogus patriarch: Paul Tagaris Palaiologos, Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem and Catholic patriarch of Constantinople in the fourteenth century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 21 (1970) 289–99 (repr. in D.M. Nicol, *Byzantium: Ecclesiastical History and Relations with the Western World* (London 1972) no. IX); Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen*, 376–81.

14 Miklosich and Müller, II, 225.30–1.

gave his work: 'About what happened to myself and other related events,'¹⁵ which catches its random character rather well. The temptation is to classify it as memoirs, but Sphrantzes chose not to. Memoirs (*Apomnemonemata*) were almost certainly too ambitious a label for what he had in mind. By the literary standards of his time it was a very modest work, as becomes obvious when you compare it with the other Byzantine histories of the demise of Byzantium. It is far less accomplished in conventional literary terms, than the histories of Doukas and Kritoboulos, let alone Chalkokondyles. It has more in common with the Short Chronicles,¹⁶ which are so common for late Byzantium. But the wealth of personal and autobiographical detail, which Sphrantzes' work contains, makes it something quite different from a Short Chronicle.

If by the standards of his time Sphrantzes was not much of a scholar, he was a trusted and conscientious imperial agent. As such, he had to keep records, in the same way as any other servant of Church or State. This he will have done using a notebook or a commonplace book, which he will later have used as the raw material of his narrative. How can we be so sure about this? It is not just a matter of the chronological precision of his work, but also of the presence in it of so many stray, inconsequential entries, which fit clumsily into a historical narrative, but are the stuff of a notebook. We are able to get a rough idea of Sphrantzes' notebook from the remains of one that has survived from the first half of the fifteenth century. It belonged to an official of the Church of Thessalonike.¹⁷ Only nine folios have survived as part of the binding of another manuscript. Its subject matter is — in no completely consistent fashion — arranged thematically. Large blanks have been left for new entries. It starts with the author's financial responsibilities as an ecclesiastical administrator; with payments made and received. Another section is devoted to family matters — for example, the births and deaths of his children, a topic that has a surprisingly prominent place in Sphrantzes' work. Finally important historical events are noted in the manner of a Short Chronicle. In all these different sections the author devoted enormous care to chronology. This notebook served a similar function to those *ricordanze*, which provide such vivid insights into Quattrocento Florence.¹⁸ Though filled with personal details it is rather impersonal in its concentration on fact. There is no expression of opinion, beyond disapproval of the Venetian take-over of Thessalonike in 1423.

Sphrantzes must have been working from something like this, but his court connections will have meant that he had access to a much richer range of information than that available to an officer of the Church of Thessalonike. If he prefers to juxtapose his private and public lives rather than keeping them separate in the manner of the latter's notebook, this was part of the process of converting his raw material into a personal history. He is unlikely to have had the leisure to do this until towards the end of his life, when he retired

15 Sphrantzes, 4.2–3

16 See Sphrantzes, 36*–37*.

17 S. Kugéas, 'Notizbuch eines Beamten der Metropolis in Thessalonike aus dem Anfang des XV. Jahrhunderts', *BZ* 23 (1914) 143–63.

18 P.J. Jones, 'Florentine families and Florentine diaries in the fourteenth century', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 24 (1956) 183–206.

to Corfu, where from 1462 he was resident in the monastery of Sts Jason and Sosipatros, just outside the medieval town. One of the reasons why Sphrantzes chose this monastery was the presence there of his confessor Dorotheos, for whom he had the greatest respect and affection.¹⁹ The monastery seems to have been a focus for a group of Byzantine aristocrats uprooted by the Turkish conquest, who would have been seeking explanations of the calamity they had lived through. This kind of an audience would explain both the level of language used, a literary form of contemporary Greek, and the anecdotal tone of much of the narrative. It would not only explain the strong monastic imprint on the concluding section, but also the history's preservation. It was an audience, which would have appreciated Sphrantzes' wealth of personal details and pen portraits. It would have appreciated too his line of defence both of the Emperor Constantine XI and of himself, because he would have been expressing a shared belief that in supporting the emperor they had behaved honourably and had betrayed neither the empire nor their faith.

Sphrantzes is an engaging commentator on events, who places at the centre of his narrative his experience and emotions. These are then refracted through the prism of his relations with his masters, first the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos and then his son Constantine Palaiologos, who was to be Byzantium's last emperor. Sphrantzes recorded a conversation he had with the latter, a day or so after arriving back in Constantinople following a fruitless mission to Georgia and Trebizond, which had lasted a month short of two years. The emperor now proposed to send him on a mission that would take him first to the Peloponnese and then to Cyprus and after that back to Georgia. Sphrantzes protested that, as much as he knew where his duty to the emperor lay, he could not but feel that his wife might have other ideas. He feared that she might take another husband or become a nun. The emperor replied that if she consented to his absence on one last mission, she could have his sworn promise that her husband would never be sent on another.²⁰ This anecdote illustrates with brilliant simplicity the conflict of public duty and private life. Sphrantzes' narrative is full of anecdotes of this kind. They are essential to his presentation of the past, which has as its ultimate aim a defence of the emperors Manuel II Palaiologos and Constantine XI and not least of Sphrantzes himself. The hinge of his narrative is the fall of Constantinople, in the sense that it casts its shadow over the whole work. Why Sphrantzes failed to provide details of the siege and fall of Constantinople remains a mystery, where speculation has not proved helpful. But despite his failure to deal with the fall of Constantinople he does provide a long post mortem on the event, in which he blames foreign powers for their failure to offer any worthwhile help to Byzantium in its time of need. He was quite unable to understand why such a disaster should have been saved up for so blameless a figure as Constantine XI:

19 Sphrantzes, XLI, 7: 170.1–8; XLII, 12: 176.7–10.

20 Sphrantzes, XXXIII, 2–3: 118–20.

Who else performed as many fasts and prayers; who else took more care of the poor either personally or through priests, to whom he gave money; who else made more offerings to God for the liberation of Christians from Turkish captivity? However, God ignored all these actions, for what sins I do not know, while people showed him no respect and each said what they liked against him.²¹

Sphrantzes too suffered. He was captured at the fall of Constantinople. If he was released fairly quickly, his family did not fare so well. In captivity his wife was separated from their son and daughter, who passed into the possession of Mehmed II. The son was executed soon afterwards allegedly for plotting against the sultan, while the daughter died of plague in the harem. Sphrantzes set off to rescue his wife. He made his way to Adrianople, where he was able to ransom his wife and bring her back with him to Mistra.²² These trials had been saved up for him and left him, as he often maintained, the most miserable of creatures. He had suffered, but was there any explanation? He will have been aware of the charge that the underlying cause of the fall of Constantinople was the Union of Churches sealed at Florence, which was then imposed on the Orthodox Church by Constantine XI. Sphrantzes used his work to distance himself from the charge of being a Latin collaborator. He agreed that the Union at Florence had been a root cause of the fall of Constantinople, but the dogmatic differences separating the two churches were a matter of indifference to him. He left it to others to decide such matters. He was more than happy with the faith handed down from his forefathers. Just as he saw no reason to change the accustomed route he took through the city to St Sophia, so there was no reason to make any alterations to his faith. But this was not why he condemned the Union of Churches. He would have given one of his eyes for a proper Union. He condemned it because it provided the sultan with a pretext to lay siege to Constantinople and to capture it.²³ Sphrantzes' outlook was overwhelmingly pragmatic. He saw relations with the Latins in political rather than religious terms. He conveyed his views through his anecdote about the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos advising his son John VIII on the advantages of negotiations with the papacy over the Union of Churches as a way of bringing pressure to bear on the Ottomans. But on no account, the emperor warned, should these be allowed to come to fruition, because of the internal dissension union would produce, at which point John VIII left the room without a word. The Emperor Manuel then confided to Sphrantzes that his son still dreamt of imperial glory, while what the Empire needed was not an emperor, so much as a steward. In other words, Sphrantzes was using this incident – historical or not – to deflect blame for the fall of Constantinople onto John VIII Palaiologos for failing to heed his father's advice and effecting a Union of Churches.²⁴ How one stood over the Union was a burning issue.

21 Sphrantzes, XXXVI, 14: 142.9–14.

22 Sphrantzes, XXXV, 11–12: 134–6; XXXVII, 3: 144.5–9; XXXVII, 9: 146.7–9; XXXVII, 6: 144.27–32.

23 Sphrantzes, XXIII, 1–4: 80.1–29.

24 Sphrantzes, XXIII, 5–7: 82.1–26.

III

This emerges even more forcefully from Sylvester Syropoulos' work on the Council of Florence. He had no compunction about labelling his narrative *Apomnemoneumata*, in other words memoirs. They constitute his systematic recollections of the council and are by far the most detailed and concerted treatment of a single event by any Byzantine historian. Sphrantzes' work by comparison is disjointed, erratic, artless and uneven.

The loss of the opening section of Syropoulos' memoirs means that we can never know their exact starting point. The surviving narrative begins in the reign of Manuel II Palaiologos with the events of 1416, which saw the death of one patriarch and the election of another – Joseph II, who would still be patriarch at the time of the council. These were events of which Syropoulos would have had some memory, since he was around sixteen years old and on the threshold of a career in the Patriarchal Church. His father and other relatives held high positions within the Patriarchal Church. His rapid preference therefore comes as little surprise. By 1430 he had become Grand Ecclesiarch, the position that he was still holding after the council had broken up. However, in his *Memoirs* he keeps personal detail to a minimum. He tells us far less about himself and his family than George Sphrantzes does in his *History*. But he recounts his own participation in the events described and sets out his reactions to and opinions about events and personalities. These provide a running commentary, which holds the narrative together and provides the vividness of eyewitness reporting. In much the same way as George Sphrantzes, he is adept at recreating scenes by the use of dialogue and deft pen portraits. But in all respects Syropoulos' *Memoirs* are superior to Sphrantzes' *History*. While both authors favour a literary form of Byzantine *koine* in preference to some classicising style, it is Syropoulos, who is by far the more elegant writer. His *Memoirs* are also more fully developed and far more dramatic and inventive. They are on such a scale that one immediately wonders what sources Syropoulos had at his disposal. He is unlikely to have kept a notebook, because, in contrast to Sphrantzes' *History*, there are few precise dates or random entries. Still more telling is a comparison with the official journal of proceedings, which provides a chronological framework for the Greek *Acta* of the council of Florence. This consists of purely factual reportage with a strong emphasis on chronological accuracy. The lack of personal detail or comment is such that it has been quite impossible to establish who the author of the journal was.²⁵ Since it was being kept as an official record, Syropoulos is bound to have known about it. Whether he used it directly is another matter, for his *Memoirs* provide a complement and, deliberately or not, a riposte to the official *Acta*. They do not cover the official sessions in the same detail as the *Acta*, but make clear what was happening behind the scenes in the Byzantine delegation. The purpose was to show just how much pressure was applied both by the emperor and the pope to force the union through. To do so Syropoulos had to include a great deal about himself, for which he expected criticism. He did not think, however,

25 J. Gill, *Personalities of the Council of Florence and other essays* (Oxford 1964) 144–77.

that it was inappropriate to dwell on his own role at the council, because it was a part of the ebb and flow of history, which emerged from the materials he had at his disposal.²⁶ The underlying purpose of his narrative emerges from an incident, which occurred soon after the return to Constantinople from Florence of the Greek delegation. Syropoulos tried to explain to the emperor's chief minister (*mesazon*) why he had become estranged from the new patriarch Metrophanes, who supported the Union of Churches. At Florence he too had worked for Union on the understanding that it was in the best interests of the Church and his country (*patris*) and people (*genos*), but he had feared then that its terms endangered the faith: misgivings, which subsequent developments had only confirmed. He had therefore foresworn the Union and gone into opposition.²⁷ It was a justification both for his conditional support for Union during the council and for his subsequent opposition to it. He painted himself as the voice of reason, good sense and conciliation; as one, who was seeking union with Rome on terms, which did not infringe Orthodoxy. To this end he stood up to the Emperor John VIII and the Patriarch Joseph, who in his opinion were inclined to push through Union at almost any price. He is critical of the patriarch, who to his way of thinking was too subservient to the emperor's wishes, while his treatment of the emperor bordered on the subversive.²⁸ For example, when John VIII rejected a monk known for the independence of his views, as suitable for the Byzantine delegation, Syropoulos commented that had its members been more independent minded the emperor 'would not have pushed the Church into the abyss.'²⁹ Vitalien Laurent, the editor of Syropoulos' *Memoirs*, even wondered whether they might not originally have circulated clandestinely, as a *Secret History*, so implicitly critical are they of the emperor.³⁰ A theme of Syropoulos' *Memoirs* was the unhappy consequence of imperial intervention in ecclesiastical affairs. He traced this back to the reign of Manuel II Palaiologos, when the latter attempted to impose his own nominee as a metropolitan bishop. This aroused opposition from the patriarch, but death overtook his threat to resign unless there was a reduction in imperial interference. The emperor exploited the ensuing vacancy to obtain written recognition from the patriarchal synod of his rights over the Church. Syropoulos admitted that there was much to admire in Manuel II Palaiologos, but he was quite unable to approve of the way he had 'reduced the Church of Christ to a condition of servitude', a state of affairs, which he bequeathed to his successors.³¹ It had allowed John VIII to force the Greek delegation to accept terms for Union that were at best questionable. Syropoulos presented this as the root cause of opposition to the Union. His main purpose was to make the case for the anti-unionists, but in doing so he used personal details, such as his interventions during the

26 Syropoulos, XII, 15:566.22–3.

27 Syropoulos, XII, 10: 556–559. Cf. N.G. Polites, 'Η μετάνοια τοῦ Σιλβέστρου Συροπούλου', *EEBS* 39–40 (1972–73) 386–402.

28 Gill, *Personalities of the Council of Florence*, 170–5.

29 Syropoulos, III, 11: 172.1–5.

30 Syropoulos, 41.

31 Syropoulos, II, 4: 104.12–15.

council, as a way of exonerating himself from his reluctant decision to sign the Tome of Union.

IV

History had long served as a vehicle for autobiography. More surprising is the way it was beginning to infiltrate other branches of literature. For example, there is an autobiographical dimension to both the satire of *Mazaris* and the comedy of *Katablattas*. *Mazaris* was written in 1415. Unlike earlier Byzantine satires it made extensive use of Aristophanes, which gives an edge to its criticism of Byzantine court society. It revolves around the misadventures of its protagonist, who goes by the name of Mazaris. These have a strongly autobiographical flavour. Mazaris was either a doctor or closely connected with the medical profession.³² He was a supporter of the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos in his struggle with his nephew John VII. When Manuel II was in virtual exile in the West after 1399 Mazaris refused to change his allegiance. Despite his loyalty he missed out on preferment, when the emperor returned from the West in 1403, while those who had gone over to John VII did very well. He found himself falsely accused of some financial peccadillo. Out of favour with the emperor he decided to abandon Constantinople for the Peloponnese, where he heard that there were rich pickings to be had: an item of intelligence of which he was quickly disabused. He was advised to try his luck in Crete or Cephalonia.³³ Since it is impossible to establish the identity of the author of *Mazaris*, it is equally impossible to establish the authenticity of the autobiographical material. But this is less important than the autobiographical approach adopted, which becomes a distinguishing feature of *Mazaris*. It not only holds the plot together, but it also gives substance to the narrator and immediacy to the narrative and engages with the contemporary scene, in a way which earlier Byzantine satires were unable to do, not even the *Timarion*.³⁴

While we have no firm date for the comedy of *Katablattas*, we do know the name of its author. He was the great scholar John Argyropoulos (ca.1394–1487). He intended it as a succinct defence against charges of impiety and atheism, which had been brought against him. It took the form of a comedy (κωμῳδία),³⁵ as he called it; no doubt because of his debt to Aristophanes, though invective might be closer to the mark. It was directed against his accuser, whom he miscalls Katablattas. By coincidence they had been at school together at Thessalonike in the early years of the fifteenth century. Now that their paths crossed again, Argyropoulos was determined to show him up for the scoundrel he was from his schooldays on. It was an approach, which required that Argyropoulos provide some details of his own life, as proof of his own good character.

32 *Mazaris*, 66.9–10.

33 *Mazaris*, 74.33–76.1.

34 Only B. Baldwin, 'The Mazaris. Reflections and reappraisal', *Illinois Classical Studies* 18(1993) 345–58, does justice to the text's literary qualities.

35 *Katablattas*, 31.50.

He therefore set out a brief résumé of his life.³⁶ He was born in Constantinople, unlike his opponent, who hailed from Serres in deepest Macedonia. Though orphaned at an early age he had a good schooling thanks to an uncle, even if it meant going to Thessalonike, where he first met his accuser. However, aged fourteen — that is, around 1408 — Argyropoulos had the opportunity to return to Constantinople, where he continued his education with one of the foremost teachers of the day, who treated him like a son and furthered his career. He had him enrolled in the clergy of St Sophia and found him a wife. Whether this autobiographical snatch was enough to defend his reputation depends very much on the dating of his comedy. The editors place this work in the period 1430 to 1453, with a presumption that it falls within the years 1430–1440 because there are no allusions to any historical events after the fall of Thessalonike in 1430 to the Ottomans, which provides a *terminus post quem*.³⁷ The editors also pointed to the similarities of phrasing, which unite this tract with other invectives of John Argyropoulos which, we now know, thanks to Th. Ganchou, were composed in 1424.³⁸ This strengthens the case for an early date for the tract against Katablattas, as does Argyropoulos' failure to mention the Council of Florence or his studies at the University of Padua, from which he graduated in 1443. The trajectory of Argyropoulos' career is troubling. He received his original licence to teach from the emperor Manuel II Palaiologos before 1421, when he was still in his mid-twenties. He should have played a prominent role at the Council of Florence, but his name is missing from the official records, which calls into question the information retailed by the historian Doukas that he served in tandem with George Gemistos Plethon as an imperial adviser at the council.³⁹ If he participated in the council, it could only have been in some unofficial capacity. His career had apparently stalled. Only on the eve of the fall of Constantinople, when he was appointed head of the most prestigious of Constantinople's schools, the Xenon of the Kral, did he receive a promotion worthy of his talents.⁴⁰ It is very tempting to assume that the charges against him of impiety and atheism explain both his failure to progress in the years before the Council of Florence and thereafter his decision to leave Constantinople for Padua. However, the charges themselves are problematic. They suggest that Argyropoulos was an adherent of George Gemistos Plethon's brand of Neoplatonism, which many suspected was a cover for a return to paganism. It did not, of course, prevent Plethon from going to the Council of Florence as an imperial adviser. In any case, Argyropoulos never seems to have been very close to Plethon, even intellectually. Argyropoulos was always an Aristotelian. He was also a unionist, while Plethon

36 Katablattas, 71–5.

37 Katablattas, 8–9, 16, 18–20.

38 Th. Ganchou, 'Iōannēs Argyropoulos, Gεὼργιος Trapézountios et le patron crétois Gεὼργιος Maurikas', *Thesaurismata* 38 (2008) 105–212.

39 Doukas, *Historia Byzantina*, ed. I. Becker [CHSB] (Bonn 1834) 214.2

40 B. Mondrain, 'Jean Argyropoulos professeur à Constantinople et ses auditeurs médecins, d'Andronic Éparque à Démétrios Angelos', in C. Scholz and G. Makris, eds., *ΠΟΛΥΤΑΕΥΡΟΣ ΝΟΥΣ*, *Miscellanea für Peter Schreiner zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* (Munich 2000) 223–50.

was opposed to the Union of Churches. When Argyropoulos issued a tract supporting the Latin position on the procession of the Holy Ghost, it was left to Plethon to refute it.⁴¹ Another possibility is that Argyropoulos was caught up in the activities of that Juvenal, who was eventually put to death for alleged paganism in 1450, but his notoriety dated back to before the council of Florence. Around 1437 George Scholarios apprised the Emperor John VIII Palaiologos of his activities. The emperor then had him investigated and disciplined by the bishops of Sardis and Koroni. Juvenal was at the time an acquaintance of the future patriarch, Gregory Melissenos; in other words he was a man, who had entrée to the highest ecclesiastical circles, and will have been a more significant figure than is usually allowed.⁴² Association with such a man had its dangers and would have been quite enough to persuade Argyropoulos that retreat to Italy was the safest option. Denunciations, false or not, were part of the politics of the time. Their vicious character emerges from the way George Scholarios reproved Bessarion for using acolytes to do his dirty work. He compared them to a pack of hunting dogs. They fawned over their master and attacked his enemies and even his friends.⁴³ We can believe that Katablattas was not acting alone, when he denounced Argyropoulos; that behind him was somebody else, whose identity, like so much else in Argyropoulos' early career, remains a mystery.

Argyropoulos' autobiographical sketch draws a veil over at least one important incident in his early career. There is no mention of his stay from 1423 to 1424 in Crete, where he acted as tutor to the son of a leading figure of the Greek community of Candia.⁴⁴ Argyropoulos limits himself to a minimum of autobiographical detail, just sufficient to clear his name and to provide a moral justification for his invective. This way of proceeding became more common in Byzantium's last years, but it was far from being obligatory, as George Scholarios' *apologia* for his Latin studies shows. During the negotiations leading to the Council of Florence these left him open to the accusation, which was not without foundation, that he was a Latin sympathiser. In the same way as Demetrios Kydones Scholarios found in the thought of Thomas Aquinas a key to the understanding of Christianity. For both men it amounted to a conversion experience, which could not be denied. Although George Scholarios would repudiate any unionist sympathies he may ever have had, he never foreswore his attachment to Thomas Aquinas. Almost the last thing he was working on were versions of Aquinas for an Orthodox public.⁴⁵ Unlike Demetrios Kydones he did not feel the need to include any personal details in his defence against his detractors. He was content with the assertion that his interest in

41 C.M. Woodhouse, *Gemistos Plethon: the last of the Hellenes* (Oxford 1986) 273–82.

42 *Oeuvres complètes de Gemade Scholarios*, ed. L. Petit *et al*, 8 vols. (Paris 1928–36) (hereafter Scholarios) IV, 476–89; Syropoulos, 537, n.8; Woodhouse, *Gemistos Plethon*, 271–2, 315–18; M.-H. Blanchet, *Georges-Gemadios Scholarios (vers 1400-vers 1472): un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l'empire byzantin* [Archives de l'Orient Chrétien, 20] (Paris 2008) 182–3.

43 Scholarios, III, 111.3–15

44 Ganchou, 'Ioannès Argyropoulos', esp.136–41.

45 Blanchet, *Scholarios*, 217–20.

Latin culture and his cultivation of friendships with Latins in no way diminished his Byzantine identity nor the steadfastness of his loyalty to Orthodoxy.

IV

Scholarios' reluctance to use personal details to defend himself against the charge of being a Latin-sympathizer did not mean that he never deployed them, but it would have to wait until after the fall of Constantinople, when he had become patriarch. He had followed a tortuous path from being a supporter of union with Rome to becoming the leader of the anti-unionists and, ultimately, the sultan's choice as patriarch.⁴⁶ It was a journey that left him with many hostages to fortune. After his return from the Council of Florence. Scholarios retained the favour of the Emperor John VIII Palaiologos, but on the latter's death found himself in bad odour with the new emperor Constantine XI, almost certainly because he was too close to the emperor's brother Demetrios, who had made a bid for the throne. Scholarios took monastic vows and went into retirement, which did not prevent him from directing opposition to the union.⁴⁷ He survived the sack of Constantinople to become the first patriarch of the new dispensation. This left him with a great deal of explaining to do. He tried to make sense of the new order and his position in it with the help of autobiographical passages contained in his 'Pastoral Letter' of 1454⁴⁸ and his *Lament* for his life of 1460.⁴⁹

His transformation from opposition leader to head of his people was sudden and traumatic. It was the hinge on which his later life turned. These turning points invite reflection on the self: most famously that moment in the garden from the *Confessions* of St Augustine. But for Augustine it was a conversion experience; in a sense it was a recovery of Eden, while for George Scholarios it was the reverse. The fall of Constantinople represented an expulsion from Eden. He waxes lyrical about his time at the court of John VIII Palaiologos. Not only was he the court preacher, but he also presided over the imperial tribunal, where he distinguished himself by his clarity and fairness. He took great pains over his judgements, because he hoped that they would serve as models for future generations of judges and lawyers. In the same way his work as a teacher was intended as the passing on of a great tradition.⁵⁰ But this happy state of affairs came to an end with the death of John VIII Palaiologos, which, as Scholarios says, 'ushered in the painful demise of our polity.' The accession of Constantine XI compelled George Scholarios to withdraw from court. His intention, he insisted, was to go into monastic retirement. He only became the leader of opposition to the emperor's imposition of union, because of pressure from his supporters. Here Scholarios is doing his best to defend himself from the charge that his stance before and during the siege of Constantinople

46 See J. Gill, *Personalities of the Council of Florence and other Essays* (Oxford 1964) 79–94.

47 Blanchet, *Scholarios*, 419–26.

48 Scholarios, IV, 211–31; Blanchet, *Scholarios*, 496–99.

49 Scholarios, I, 283–94; Blanchet, *Scholarios*, 499–502.

50 Scholarios I, 288–90.

amounted to treason. He claimed that he had only stayed in Constantinople because he hoped to be able to serve his country in some capacity.⁵¹ Paradoxically, it took the fall of the city for this to happen. Lead away into Turkish captivity he was quickly redeemed by the conqueror and appointed patriarch of Constantinople. He was duly installed in office on 6 January 1454. Again he insists that events were beyond his control. In other words, he is presenting himself as an instrument of divine providence, because he understood the restoration of the patriarchate to be an instance of divine mercy. The interest of his account of how he became patriarch lies partly in the details of Constantinople immediately after the conquest and partly in his attitude to the survivors, which will build into a conviction that they were not worthy of him.

Rescued by the sultan, George Scholarios returned to Constantinople, which he 'found in a far more miserable state than he was able to describe.' His initial task was to take charge of a monastery, 'which had been plundered and stripped bare'. It brought him face to face with the realities created by the conquest: the arrogance of the Ottoman authorities; the insubordination of his monks, but the greatest disappointment was the utter demoralization of the survivors, who 'made little effort either to live according to the ways of their fathers or to worship God according to the law'.⁵² Among other things George Scholarios was faced with the problem of apostasy, which even affected bishops. These were, as far as he could see, the wages of sin, a sign of the way that the Byzantines had failed to repent, even if God had given them plenty of opportunities to do so. They had failed to heed George Scholarios' warnings. They had to understand that there was nothing unlucky or accidental about the fall of Constantinople. It was a divine judgement on them.

They were left with the hope that, just as God had released the Jews from exile, so too would He rescue the Byzantines. An auspicious sign came in the shape of new martyrs, whose steadfastness was all the remarkable, because unlike the early martyrs they were living in an age of apostasy. However they ought to be aware of what they had lost — a civilization which Scholarios had striven to hand on to future generations, whether through his teaching or through his judicial activities. It is easy to see why he found it so hard to come to terms with the demise of a civilization which the fall of the city entailed. He mourned the destruction of learning and education, and with them the most beautiful of languages. People now knew as much about sacred dogma, as Scholarios did about dancing or playing the guitar. They preferred to believe in the shades of their ancestors and in old wives' tales. Scholarios conjures up the strangest and most personal of images to illustrate the depths to which Constantinople had sunk. The city was like some highly respected matron, who had kicked over the traces and began dancing in the streets to the deep shame of her son, who preferred to leave the scene.⁵³ Scholarios clearly looked on Constantinople as a mother, as many other

51 Scholarios IV, 226.9–35.

52 Scholarios IV, 224–25.

53 Scholarios I, 290.30–4.

Byzantines did. It had failed him. This was the essential reason why having been miraculously raised to the patriarchate he had now to resign his office. Their ignorance and obduracy prevented him from offering his people the guidance they needed; from helping them to fashion a new identity to replace the one they had lost. His resignation had left him without bearings. He resented the bonds that still linked him to ‘the sorry remnants of his race (*genos*)’. He claimed he had a right to speak as he did because his birthplace now filled him with sorrow, just as formerly it had provided him with all his joys. He no longer had a homeland. This had to be sought elsewhere, ‘which is where our city now is’.⁵⁴ The fall of Constantinople shattered Scholarios’ sense of identity, which was embedded in the city. It left him with little sense of purpose. His *Lament* is not just about his loss of identity; it is also a reproach directed at Constantinople for failing him. Its fall produced a moral collapse among its people, with the result that they rejected Scholarios. Underlying this was the bitterness he felt over the opposition he had encountered when he took up the patriarchate.

His sense of self, his sense of self-importance, if you like, came from his conviction that he was motivated by the good of his country and guided by his devotion to Orthodoxy. However, his high-mindedness went hand-in-hand with a failure to develop or at least to value personal relationships. His closest relationship was a symbolic one: with Constantinople, which, he claims, gave him his greatest joys and his greatest sorrows. His devotion to his native city emerged from his passionate evocation of what it was before its fall. Despite a reduced state, when compared with its former glories, it still remained free and a focal point of the Christian world. There was no other city, however flourishing, to vie with it. It ensured that its inhabitants continued to prosper, while its marvels continued to astound foreign visitors, who thought that ‘they had been snatched up to another heaven’.⁵⁵ How was existence possible without it:

Oh, best of native cities, how can we survive your loss and how can you bear to be without us, the dearest of your children? Worse, how can we endure still to be alive, when you are beyond the reach of men? For though apparently still here, you are gone for ever.⁵⁶

With these last words Scholarios was able to catch the irrevocable transition from Byzantine Constantinople to Ottoman Istanbul. It meant a shattering of his identity. He was never able to rebuild another, beyond being able to say, ‘I am a Christian’.⁵⁷ This was the message of his ‘autobiographical’ passages, which surely reflects his deepest feelings. Almost always, in one way or another, autobiography is about the search for, the attainment, or the affirmation of a sense of identity. Scholarios is dealing in the exact opposite: its destruction. No one else understood or expressed

54 Scholarios I, 293.8–18.

55 Scholarios I, 287.6–31.

56 Scholarios I, 287.31–4.

57 A.D. Angelou, ‘“Who am I?” Scholarios’ answers and the Hellenic identity’, in *ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝ*, 1–19.

quite so well the meaning of the passing of a great civilization. At one level Scholarios was resorting to autobiography in the usual way as a means of exonerating himself from criticism. But taken together his scattered fragments of autobiography are something more: they constitute a meditation on the disintegration of a sense of identity, which was a consequence of the fall of Constantinople.

V

They reveal the depths of his character, which won the respect of the Sultan Mehmed II⁵⁸ and inspired affection among his close collaborators, such as Theodore Agallianos, who liked to think of himself as Barnabas to Gennadios' Paul in their struggle against the Union of Churches.⁵⁹ He compared Gennadios' work as patriarch to that of Joseph, who was able to feed his people at a time of famine and to that of Moses, who led his people out of Egypt.⁶⁰ However, seeking to preserve Gennadios' legacy Agallianos found himself under attack for his conduct as *chartophylax* of the Great Church, a position, to which the patriarch had promoted him. His defence came in the form of two texts (*logoi*). The first was in the unexpected form of an autobiography and was entitled 'About the events of his life or concerning the charges against him';⁶¹ the second was his speech for the defence (*apologetikos*), which he delivered in 1463 when called before the patriarchal synod.⁶² His decision to separate autobiography from *apologia* was an innovation. It offered a neat solution to the difficulties there were in using *apologia* as a vehicle for autobiography. Instead of being limited in the usual way to snatches of autobiography it allowed Agallianos to produce a genuine autobiography.⁶³ Its theme is his struggle to preserve Orthodoxy in the face of its and his enemies. His credentials were impeccable. His parents entrusted him as a child to the care of the Patriarch Joseph II (1416–39), who became his patron and mentor. The patriarch made sure that Agallianos had the best teachers of the time and in due course in 1425 found him a position among the secretaries of the patriarchal church. He then had Agallianos promoted to the office of *hieromonachos*.⁶⁴ As an officer of the patriarchal church he was included among the Byzantine delegation to the Council. Shortly before departure there was the celebration of the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, which falls on 14 September. The patriarch officiated in the

58 M.-H. Blanchet, 'L'ambiguïté du statut juridique de Gennadios Scholarios après la chute de Constantinople (1453)', in D. Muresan and P. Odorico, eds., *Le Patriarcat œcuménique de Constantinople aux XIVe-XVIe siècles : ruptures et continuité*, [Dossiers byzantins, 7] (Paris 2007) 195–211.

59 K. Patrinelis, 'Ο Θεόδωρος Ἀγαλλιανός ταυτιζόμενος πρὸς τὸν Θεοφάνη Μηδεῖας καὶ οἱ ἀνέκδοτοι λόγοι του', *Επετηρίς του Μεσαιωνικου Αρχείου* 14 (1966) 97.218–20.

60 Agallianos, 98.258–61.

61 Agallianos, 91.25.

62 Agallianos, 129.1370.

63 M.J. Angold, 'Theodore Agallianos: the last Byzantine Autobiography', in E. Matos Guirao *et al.*, eds., *Constantinopla: 550 años de su caída*, ed. (Granada 2006) I, 1–11.

64 Agallianos, 93–4.

church of St Sophia with the emperor and the papal legates in attendance. Theodore Agallianos set off from home early to participate in the liturgy at St Sophia, but by the time he reached the Great Church the pain in his legs was so intense that he had to return home, where he took to his bed. He had little difficulty in rationalizing his illness. It was divine providence's way of preventing him from attending the Council of Florence. The moment he heard the bells of the monasteries and churches ringing to wish the Byzantine delegation to the council 'God speed' and the crowds shouting their encouragement, Theodore jumped out of bed, mounted his horse and went to the church of St Michael to give thanks for a miraculous recovery. From the columns of the hippodrome he saw the Byzantine fleet sailing out of the Golden Horn bound for Venice.⁶⁵

I do not see that there is any reason to doubt that Agallianos' physical collapse and miraculous recovery were quite genuine. They display all the signs of a psychosomatic illness. The question of union with Rome will have put immense pressure on anybody belonging to the Patriarch Joseph's inner circle, as the latter struggled to make up his mind whether or not to participate in the council. In some ways, it was fortunate that the Patriarch Joseph died at Florence before the proclamation of union. News of his death at long last allowed Agallianos to oppose the union openly. By the time the Byzantine delegation returned from Italy, he was organizing opposition to the union in Constantinople. He claims that he was subjected to all kinds of persecution. The mob attacked his house and threatened not only his life, but also those of his wife and children.⁶⁶ He had a major role in the creation and organisation of the *Synaxis* — the group opposed to the union — and became the right hand man of its leader George Scholarios.⁶⁷ Despite his work for the *Synaxis* Agallianos retained his position in the patriarchal administration. He remained responsible for supervising new ordinations,⁶⁸ which in the circumstances gave him considerable power. The disaffection of members of the patriarchal clergy, such as Agallianos, was a factor in the decision of the pro-unionist Patriarch Gregory Melissenos to leave Constantinople in 1450 and to retire to Rome. The victory of the anti-unionists was short-lived. The arrival of Isidore of Kiev as papal legate in the autumn of 1452 brought new pressures. Agallianos claims that he alone of the members of the *Synaxis* publicly opposed Isidore.⁶⁹

Theodore Agallianos presents his life as a struggle to preserve Orthodoxy; in the first place by opposing the Union of Churches. His anti-unionist credentials could hardly be in doubt. It helped him to rationalize the fall of Constantinople: it was divine punishment

65 Agallianos, 94–5.

66 Agallianos, 96.183–204.

67 Agallianos, 97.209–21. See now, M.-H. Blanchet, *Théodore Agallianos, Dialogue avec un moine contre les Latins (1442)* (Paris 2013); eadem, 'Image de l'Union et de la croisade dans le Dialogue avec un moine contre les Latins de Théodore Agallianos (1442)', in *Italy and Europe's eastern border (1204–1669)* (Frankfurt 2012) 31–44.

68 Agallianos, 97.225–227.

69 Agallianos, 97.236–41.

for abandoning Orthodoxy at the Council of Florence.⁷⁰ Although Agallianos lived through the fall of the City and was led away into captivity, he has nothing in detail on this event. Unlike the Union of Florence it was not a traumatic event that forced him to take sides. If anything, it simply confirmed the justice of his opposition to the union. He saw the fall of Constantinople as a way in which God forced the Greeks to come to their senses. But more than that: the new ruler was providentially persuaded to reinstate 'the race of Christians': 'He gave orders that we should rule ourselves according to our own traditional customs and laws and that we should have a priesthood and churches and an episcopate, simply everything that constituted a Christian order.'⁷¹

On the face of it Agallianos seems to have welcomed the fall of Constantinople. It rescued the Orthodox Church from the Latin embrace, while allowing the Greeks to retain their ecclesiastical institutions. It reinforced the identification of Church and Christian community. But as Agallianos was to find to his cost, the ending of the prospect of union with Rome did not heal all the wounds of the Orthodox Church. The reestablishment of the patriarchate under Ottoman auspices seems only to have intensified the enduring curse of factionalism. It is a feature, which disfigures the history of the Great Church in Captivity.⁷² The last sections of Agallianos' autobiography concentrate on what we might call the office politics of the patriarchal church. There were no obviously great principles at stake, only preferment and the emoluments that went with office. Agallianos nevertheless presents it as part of his continuing struggle to preserve Orthodoxy, but this time against those who through their attacks on him were undermining its essential harmony.

Agallianos held the key position of *chartophylax*, which gave him responsibility for supervising marriages. The difficulty was that it was nearly impossible to keep track of marriages. In the past the local priest knew everybody and everything that was going on in his neighbourhood. But this was no longer the case, because the fall of Constantinople changed the pattern of settlement out of all recognition.⁷³ Agallianos admitted that as a result he had made mistakes. He had allowed marriages that contravened canon law. These mistakes gave his opponents a pretext for hounding him out of office. So much of his autobiography revolves around how he was able to thwart his opponents. He provides vivid episodes of the political realities of the time. One of his opponents obtained an office which ranked higher than that of *chartophylax*. Much to Agallianos' displeasure he asserted his seniority during a celebration of Vespers. Agallianos responded by elbowing him out of the way. The patriarch reprimanded both of them for behaving in so unseemly a fashion, but it was Agallianos, whom he forced to give way.⁷⁴ Another of his opponents, the future patriarch Maximos III (1476–82), coveted his post of

70 Agallianos, 97–8.

71 Agallianos, 98.247–57.

72 S. Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity: a study of the patriarchate of Constantinople from the eve of the Turkish Conquest to the Greek War of Independence* (Cambridge 1968) 187, 195–207.

73 Agallianos, 133.1521–8.

74 Agallianos, 110.690–5.

chartophylax. When asked what he would do if Agallianos did not resign, he muttered, 'I have ways and means of getting rid of him!'⁷⁵ He meant that he could count on the support of Greek *archontes* in the service of the sultan, who hovered in the background. When the patriarch refused to promote their candidate they threatened to abandon their support for the Church. Did he not realise that it was their efforts and influence with the sultan, which had made possible the restoration of the Orthodox Church? Without their support it would return to nothing.⁷⁶

Agallianos' autobiography was a thoroughly subjective response to the crises in his life. The first was the union negotiated at Florence, which he considered more traumatic than the fall of Constantinople to the Turks. Union called in question the whole edifice of the Byzantine identity, in a way that conquest apparently did not. It seemed to many of the survivors that a Turkish sultan might well be a better guarantor of Orthodoxy than a Latin-sympathizer of an emperor. But the naivety of such hopes became clearer the more Agallianos was forced to face up to the realities of the Ottoman conquest. His administration of marriages as part of his duties as *chartophylax* awakened him to the depths of the misery and chaos that followed the fall of Constantinople. The dislocation produced threatened to intensify the already considerable wave of conversions to Islam. Agallianos supported the leniency (*oikonomia*) urged by the Patriarch Gennadios, when dealing with difficult marriage cases. But within the Patriarchal Church there was increasing opposition to Gennadios and his supporters. Infighting was always a feature of the Patriarchal Church but Agallianos documents a new intensity, of which he was a victim, but provides very little guidance as to its deeper causes beyond attributing much to the workings of envy. He was, in other words, pointing to faction and personal ambition. Competition for office and for the benefits of office seems to lie at the heart of the struggle between competing groups of patriarchal officials. What made Agallianos such a target was his very handsome salary. Real power over the Greek community now resided in the Patriarchal Church, whence the competition for control between various factions, behind whom stood sinister figures, such as the *archontes* Demetrios Apokaukos Kyritzes and Thomas Katabolenos, both of whom were secretaries to Mehmed the Conqueror.

Agallianos' autobiography was the last Byzantine autobiography. It has none of the depths of the Patriarch Gennadios' autobiographical fragments, but it is a work of great humanity, which engages with the realities created by the conquest. It reflects among other things the efforts made by Agallianos and men of his generation to preserve Byzantine literary and intellectual traditions in the wake of the conquest. His autobiography is a reminder of their continuing strength, but it was something more than this. It was indicative of a willingness to experiment, which is testimony to the continuing vigour of Byzantine civilization down to the bitter end. Gervase Mathew may be right, after all!

75 Agallianos, 107.586.

76 Agallianos, 103.442–7.

An exile's hopes: the search for a liberator in Michael Marullus

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Michael Marullus, fifteenth-century Greek, soldier and Latin poet, lived almost all his life in exile. In his earliest poetry revanchist thoughts directed at his country's Ottoman conquerors are hardly present, and superhuman powers are held responsible for the catastrophe. Later, Byzantine reliance on foreign forces is blamed. With time however and political developments in central and western Europe, a crusade or Türkenzug seemed to become more likely, and Marullus turned to the Habsburg Maximilian I and Charles VIII of France as possible liberators. This paper attempts to describe the poet's developing treatment of the themes of defeat and exile and his response in the last decade of the fifteenth century to the possibility of military action against the Ottomans.

Who was responsible – gods, Ottomans or the Genoese *protostrator*?

When Michael Marullus published, probably around 1489, his first collection of poems, *Epigrammaton ... libri duo*,¹ he could look back on a life that had been drastically shaped by the Turkish conquest of the Byzantine empire. He was a native of the Morea and gives us to understand that he was conceived very shortly before the conquest of his *patria*. If this is understood to be the Morea, his birth would fall in the early 1460s.²

1 The book lacks any indication of place or date of publication. It is however generally agreed that it was printed in Rome by Eucharius Silber. A. Perosa, 'Studi sulla formazione delle raccolte di poesie del Marullo, *Rinascimento* 1 (1950) 125–56; 257–79 (henceforth Perosa, 'Studi') at 131–3 (= *Studi di filologia umanistica* [Rome 2000] [henceforth Perosa, *Stud. fil. uman.*] III 203–43 at 208–09), dates its publication to between June 1488 and July 1489 and in his edition, *Michaelis Marulli carmina* (Zurich [1951]) p. IX and n. 6, to early 1489. Its contents were subsequently re-edited as books I and II of the four books of *Epigrammata* in *Hymni et Epigrammata* (Florence 1497). The two editions will be referred to by Perosa's sigla of *s* and *c* respectively. The text of his edition is used throughout this paper, with *E* standing for *Epigrammata*, *HN* for *Hymni naturales*, *N* for *Neniae*, *EV* for *Epigrammata varia* and *P* for *Institutiones principales*. References to material other than textual in his edition will henceforth be to Perosa, *Edition*.

2 'Still unformed seed, I was still scarcely implanted properly in my mother's womb when my defeated country suffered the weight of enslavement' (*Vix bene adhuc fueram matris rude semen in alvo, / cum grave servitium patria victa subit*), *E* 2.32.65–6. Place and date of birth are matters of debate. The *communis*

As a small child he found refuge in Ragusa.³ While still in his teens he served as a mercenary soldier in the Black Sea region, but his future lay in Italy, where his mother, who bore the distinguished family name of Tarchaniotes, enjoyed in the Kingdom of Naples (*il Regno*) the hospitality of Francesca Marzano, an aristocratic Italian and wife of another refugee from the Turks, Leonardo III Tocco, despot of Arta.⁴ Probably because of civil war in the *Regno* (1485–87), in which his sympathies lay with opponents of the ruling Aragonese dynasty, Marullus moved to Rome, where his first book of poems was published.

The part played in this collection by the theme of his country's fall is less than might be expected, given the enormity of the disaster and its consequences.⁵ The only poem entirely devoted to it, the last in book 2 (*E* 2.49, *Ad patriam*), is deeply gloomy, describing his once powerful country as a 'pitiful corpse' (5) and those who have survived it as seeking a release that Death will not grant (24–8). But elsewhere in the collection more relaxed treatment of the theme may be found. In 1.63, a May Day poem that, being the last in book 1, parallels, and at the same time contrasts with, *Ad patriam*, he is dismissive of the 'passionate complaints' (*vaesanos ... questus*, 21) of Manilius Rhallus, a fellow-exile who wallows in grief

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opinio has him born in Constantinople c.1453; for a convenient summary see K.A.E. Enenkel, 'Todessehnsucht am Schwarzen Meer: Michael Marules' lyrische Autobiographik im "Exilgedicht" ("De exilio suo"; 1489/90; 1497) und anderen Gedichten' (henceforth Enenkel, 'Todessehnsucht') in *Die Erfindung des Menschen. Die Autobiographik des frühneuzeitlichen Humanismus von Petrarca zu Lipsius* (Berlin 2008) 368–428 at 384 and n. 22. My view that he was born in the Morea and that *patria victa* refers to its conquest has been argued in 'Spartanus Marullus' in Ch. Kalliga and A. Malliaries (eds.), *Πελοπόννησος: πόλεις και επικοινωνίες στη Μεσόγειο και τη Μαύρη Θάλασσα: Συμπόσια Ε', ΣΤ', Ζ', Η'* (Athens 2006) (henceforth McGann, 'Spartanus') 195–205; 'Reading Horace in the Quattrocento: The *Hymn to Mars* of Michael Marullus' (henceforth McGann, 'Hymn') in S.J. Harrison (ed.), *Homage to Horace. A Bimillenary Celebration* (Oxford 1995) 329–47 at 330; '1453 and all that: the end of the Byzantine empire in the poetry of Michael Marullus' (henceforth McGann, '1453') in I.D. McFarlane (ed.), *Acta conventus neo-latini sanctandreami* (Binghampton 1986) 145–51 at 145–47. As the conquest of the Morea was not complete until 1461 (D. A. Zakythinos, *Le despotat grec de Morée I* [London 1975] 273–4; contrast Enenkel, 'Todessehnsucht', 385, n. 23), the poet's year of birth (as opposed to his conception) would fall in the period 1460–2. Enenkel accepts that he was born in the Morea, but on the basis of the poet's statement that he was seventeen years old when he began service as a mercenary (*E* 2.32.71–4) and his own dating of that event to 1475 he assigns his birth to 1458, 'Todessehnsucht', 395–7. For a difficulty with this view see below n. 14.

3 *E* 4.17.9–12.

4 Giovanni Tarcagnola, *Delle istorie del mondo* II (Venice 1585) 797. See McGann, 'Spartanus Marullus', 204, n.5.

5 Y. Haskell holds that 'the liberation of his fatherland' is Marullus's 'dominant theme', 'The *Tristia* of a Greek refugee: Michael Marullus and the politics of Latin subjectivity after the Fall of Constantinople (1453)', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, N.S. 44 (1998/1999) (henceforth Haskell, *Tristia*) 110–36 at 114–15; cf. 112. She cites in support thirty-one poems 'addressed to contemporary leaders, flattering or exhorting them openly to take up arms to this end' or recalling Greek courage, but only seven of these have anything to say about the prospect of liberation, nn. 23, 24. The present paper excludes many poems that she cites and visits some others. I believe the theme grows in importance during 1490–95, but is never dominant.

for his country's downfall (*iam sat indultum patriae ruinae est*, 22), and calls for his own birthday to be celebrated. (1–20; 29–32).⁶ Admittedly literary tradition is present here: Horace had written poems of celebration in which the poet asks a friend to put out of his mind thoughts of politics or threats posed by distant peoples and instead to enjoy the present,⁷ but dismissing such concerns is easier than demanding that the plight of one's own nearby and recently enslaved country be forgotten, if only for a while. In *E* 1.22 (*De morte Iani fratris*) his brother's recent death has changed Marullus's view of his country's downfall. Once he loved country before brother (*tu mea post patriam turbasti pectora solus*, 15). But now the poet sees his death as an overwhelming climax to earlier disasters. In a sense it diminishes these by making their impact seem less painful. Destiny (*sors*) has stolen his brother away as though only the addition of his death to those previous misfortunes could make them truly hurtful (*post tot casus patriaeque domusque - / tanquam hoc exempto nil nocuisset adhuc*, 7–8).

The poem in the first collection where Marullus most eloquently probes the events of 1453, *E* 1.48 (*Consolatio ad Andream Matthaeum Aquavivium de morte Iulii patris*), is primarily concerned not with the Fall of Constantinople, but with the occupation of Otranto in 1480–81 by a Turkish army, during which Giulio Antonio Acquaviva, duke of Adria and father of the addressee, fell in action. Giulio went to war 'in defence of his sacred country, gods and religion' (23).⁸ In spite of the plural 'gods', the religion he was defending was Christianity. Giulio indeed died as a crusader as he 'led avenging gods into an oath-bound war' (25).⁹ For these to be avengers they should be concerned with what is right and holy. But they are not, and it is 'savage Destiny' with her whims that controls everything (26–8). This was shown at Constantinople when the piety and ancient faith of the *Pelasgi* (Byzantine Greeks) were shown to be useless, and no god alleviated the disaster (29–30). The great walls of the City, that *nobile opus* of the Roman people that once pleased the gods, became spoils of war and were long since handed over to the fury of the enemy. Only the glorious memory of a great people and their moral worth remain to mitigate the disaster (31–6). The fall of Byzantium, approached through the recent capture of Otranto, is treated not only as a national disaster but also as evidence for the failure of divine providence to care for a pious people.

This blaming of a superhuman power, be it Destiny, Fortune or 'the gods',¹⁰ seems to have entailed a corresponding neglect of the human agents of the disaster, the

6 Cf. *E* 2.16.39–42, the sole, hypothetical, mention of liberation in *s*, where he says that if lamentation could free his country, he would be condemned if it were not free (sc. because he had failed to lament enough); in fact lamentation is 'useful to no one and harmful to myself'.

7 c. 3.8.17–28; 29.25–33, and (of himself as *Musis amicus ... unice securus*) c. 1.26.1–6.

8 His death is thus an exception to Enenkel's generalisation that fifteenth-century Italians were not prepared to die for their country, 'Todessehnsucht', 410–11.

9 N. Housley, *The Later Crusades, 1274–1580. From Lyons to Alcazar* (Oxford 1992) 111–12.

10 At *E* 1.48.27–8 *deos* is juxtaposed with *sors fera*; cf. *E* 2.49.7–26. In a context of randomness it would be a mistake to look for any specific cause of divine anger; not surprisingly, in view of the unconfessional tenor of

Ottomans. They are not named, whether as *Teucrici* or *Turcae*,¹¹ anywhere in *s*, and it is only as the conquerors of Otranto that they appear in person as it were, but called simply *hostes*.¹² With such a tenuous presence they are, not surprisingly, nowhere identified as an enemy against whom an expedition might be mounted. And of exiles returning to Greece there is no word. In that respect at least the final poem of the collection is representative. There is no hope for the survivors: Death is deaf to their prayers and withholds the *coup de grâce*. Rejected by him, they will be finished off by their own 'tears and grief':

tamen lacrimae et dolor
quos tu recusas finient (27–8).

These, the last words of the poet's first published collection, are echoed in the last line of *De exilio suo*, a poem included in the third book of *Epigrammata* and first printed in the *Hymni et Epigrammata* of 1497 (Perosa's *c*):

Hanc (*sc.* culpam mentemque parum prudentem ducis) igitur miseri luimus longumque
luemus
dum nos Euxinus et lacrimae minuant. (*E* 3.37.47–8)
And long shall we continue to pay the cost of this (our leader's blameworthy and
foolish generalship)
until the Black Sea and our tears grind us down.

De exilio suo is an imaginative reconstruction, in the form of a dramatic monologue, written many years after the poet had, or could have, experienced the situation that it presupposes,¹³ of his thoughts and feelings as a young mercenary operating in the Black Sea area in the service of an arrogant local lord.¹⁴ The poem is focused on the dramatic present (soldiering in 'Scythia') and the past of 1453, turning to a dismal future only

Continued

his work, Marullus eschews explanations that attribute the catastrophe either to the Greeks abandoning their Orthodox heritage at Ferrara-Florence or to their failure to deliver on the promises they made there.

11 *Teucer* occurs nowhere, *Turca* at *E* 3.37.44; 4.17.41; 4.32.8; *H* 2.6.28.

12 At *E* 1.48.7 *hostes* are Ottomans threatening Italy; at 33 and 36 *hostilis* refers to Mehmed's forces in 1453. *E* 1.48 contains one exotic touch, the name *Achumus* (Ahmad Gedik, commander at Otranto) (21).

13 '(E)ine autobiographische Retrospektive', Enenkel, 'Todessehnsucht', 401. He dates the poem after the publication of *s*, which with Perosa, *Edition*, p. IX, he assigns to 1489. Perosa however believes that its subject-matter is *antiquioris aetatis*, that it is therefore early and that lack of space, *ut videtur*, precluded its inclusion in *s*, *Edition*, p. X and n. 12; see below nn. 26, 42.

14 Born between 1460 and 1462 and beginning mercenary service at the age of seventeen (see above n. 2), Marullus could have served Basarab IV, voivode of Wallachia (1477–81) (*Bessi iussa superba fero*, *E*. 3.37.10). With the usually accepted birth date of c. 1453 he would have been a mercenary from c. 1470. For a survey of various suggestions about his service see Enenkel, 'Todessehnsucht', 389–95. His own view is that Marullus took service under Matthaeus Corvinus in 1475 (he arrives at 1458 as the poet's year of birth by subtracting 17 from 1475; cf. n. 2 above), 'Todessehnsucht', 395–97. It is however difficult to believe that the *dominus* of *E* 3.37.10–12, whose *imperium[que] ferox* robbed the poet of his freedom, is also the *sanctus patriae pater*, benefactor, lawgiver and patron of the arts of *E* 4.22, a poem probably written about the same time. (Corvinus, who is there addressed as a living contemporary, died in 1490.)

in the last couplet, where the young mercenary and his comrades have nothing to look forward to except being 'ground down' by their grief and grim surroundings.¹⁵

Contemplating 1453, the poet uses the first person plural to identify himself and his companions with their fathers who had faced the besiegers: 'we' Greeks should have relied on our own resources and fought to the death; it was madness to trust foreigners and not to rely solely on Greek courage (25–40). Near the end of this passage, there is a divergence between the text of *c* and two earlier witnesses, Perosa's mss *B* and *R*.¹⁶ At this point we shall deal only with the earlier version, where the praise of Greek soldiers and the general condemnation of foreign troops (33–8) suddenly, and almost shockingly, becomes specific with a crisp reference in 39 to the Genoese (*Ligurum*): it was madness 'to mix up together companies of citizen-fighters and Genoese banners' (39). Having narrowed down the category of 'foreigner' to 'Genoese', the poet turns to an unnamed individual, whom he refers to as *miles* and *dux* (43, 46),¹⁷ savagely describing him in terms appropriate to a traitor as an 'enemy who stormed the rich Bosphoros, captured and plundered its wealth, a soldier who set fire to gods and churches and handed the Roman Empire over to the Turks' (41–4). Among the defenders of Constantinople was a force of mercenaries led by a Genoese condottiere, Giovanni Giustiniani Longo, who on his arrival in January 1453 was appointed commander-in-chief (*protostrator*) of the garrison.¹⁸ Just before the end of the siege he was wounded, controversially left his post and died. With the help of *Ligurum* a modern student of the Fall should have little difficulty in recalling Longo here, but what of readers and listeners in fifteenth-century Italy? We are here in a rather subjective realm, but some points need to be made. The reception of a poem is not a homogeneous process. Different readers bring to it not only different expectations but also different degrees of knowledge. I believe that in Italy by the late 1490s very few, and these mostly Greeks, would have known about, or been able to name, Longo. They would not have been helped to identify him by the outlandish vehemence of the attack nor by the reference to the guilty man's inadequate *consilium* (46), for it was Longo's leaving his post rather than his strategy or tactics that was criticised after the Fall. Nevertheless the knowledgeable few, and only they, will, in the light of *Ligurum* and with varying degrees of confidence, come to the view that Longo is the object of the poet's denunciation. 'We are paying the cost not of the gods' decrees, but of his foolish generalship, and long shall we continue

15 Cf. *E* 1.22.1–2.

16 For the version in *c* see the appendix below, pp. 241–44. In addition to what may be termed inherent likelihood, the priority of *BR* is supported by three facts: in *c* Maximilian takes the place held in *BR* by il Magnifico, who died in 1492 (see below, p. 233); the poem spoken in *BR* by the dead *lusus atque unica cura* of Zenobio Acciaiuoli (*E* 3.20 *bis*) does not appear in *c*, probably suppressed as discreditable to Zenobio, by then a Dominican; corresponding to *BR*'s unmetrical *fana miles* is *c*'s metrically correct *fana malis* (43). For Enenkel's view see below, n. 42.

17 See also below n. 92.

18 See now M. Philippides and W.K. Hanak, *The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453* (Farnham 2011) 377–87 and *passim*. (Longo's name is indexed as 'Justinian'.)

to pay that cost' (*longumque luemus*). But there is more to these words than that: they can also be taken, but only by those among the knowledgeable few who are also alert and acute readers, as *Longumque luemus*, 'and we shall continue to pay the cost of Longo'.¹⁹

Hoping for liberation: a Habsburg champion?

Embracing a new genre, that of *Hymni Naturales*, Marullus looked at great questions of personal or national destiny in terms of divine intervention, or neglect. In the hymn to Mercury (*H* 2.8) he deals with present and past - his exile in the valley of the Arno (7–8), his wanderings driven by fate (13–14) – and the god's generosity in giving him the gift of poetry so that his exile has not been shameful or inactive (11–12; 15–16). As is appropriate in a hymn to Mercury, the poet is much concerned with language.²⁰ His life has reached a point where, a victim of spiteful fate, he sings of ancestral rites in a tongue that is not Greek and, more mysteriously, he 'has for the first time moved with Orphic foot tripods that have been silent for so many ages' (1–6). Meanwhile he will sing of Mercury 'if not in the blessed language of my country, then gratefully in the language that has been granted me' (21–4). He ventures to hope for future glory at the god's hands, glory that will however come to him in exile (*decus labente daturus aevo exuli*, 17–20). But the concluding address seems to look forward to something more: the god is not only 'the sweet assuager of exile and my country's defeat' (70); he also directs the poet to a more positive and brighter sphere, supporting in equal measure both 'busy wits' and 'a life of action' (*commodus peraeque animo gnavo et / rebus agendis*, 71–2). The 'busy wits' are what he needs as poet and man of affairs; the 'life of action' certainly contrasts with the *otium* that may afflict the exile²¹ and perhaps points to the poet's other life, as soldier, hinting that Mercury may in future not merely give him comfort and glory while in exile from his defeated homeland but even support him in action should he take up arms to set it free.²²

In *H* 2.6 (*Marti*) the poet attributes the disasters suffered by himself and his country to Mars (21–8): 'we have been ejected from our ancestral wealth and are eaten up by Tuscan idleness' because Mars has turned his back on his own (Roman / Byzantine) descendants and favours Ottoman arms (*tristia dum fovet arma Turcae*)—a situation that

19 The pun was, to the best of my knowledge, first pointed out by Estelle Haan in the course of discussion at a seminar in Belfast in 1987, and then, independently, by A. Bihrer, 'Aeneas flieht aus Konstantinopel – Exil, Heimatliebe und Türkenkrieg in Michael Marullus' Elegie *De exilio suo* (*Epigr.* 3, 37)' (henceforth Bihrer, 'Exil') in E. Lefèvre and E. Schäfer (eds.), *Michael Marullus. Ein Grieche als Renaissancedichter in Italien* (Tübingen 2008) 11–31 at 25. On his belief that the reference to Longo is 'deutlich' see Appendix, below, p. 244.

20 Cf. *H* 4.1.17–20, where language is the badge of Greek identity.

21 Cf. *Etrusco carpimur otio*, *H* 2.6.22.

22 Cf. Jacques Chomarat's explanation of *animus gnavus* and *res agendae* as respectively 'l'activité intellectuelle, poétique en particulier' and 'l'action, les faits d'armes (synonyme de *res gerere*)', *Michel Marulle. Hymnes naturels. Édition critique* (Geneva 1995) (henceforth Chomarat, *Hymnes*) ad 71–2, p. 150.

could change if he responds to the prayers of his neglected *nepotes* (29–32). At the end of the hymn (85–9), by virtue of being both a *Rhomaïos* and (allegedly) a descendant of Marulli who once ruled Rome (*E* 2.32.135–6), the poet begs Mars, ‘father of heroes and father of weapons’, the progenitor of all Romans and by rights protector of their *patria*, ‘to grant *ob patriam* (if only I have deserved it) *pulchraque ... atque inopina fata*’ (85–8). What is this destiny he wants from Mars? Enenkel and Chomarat think of a sudden death for one’s country. But *inopina* strictly means ‘unexpected’ whereas a hero contemplates the prospect of his own death. The phrase ‘a glorious and unexpected destiny’, enfolding *ob patriam* and associated with *et virorum ... et ... armorum*, most likely looks forward to the liberation of the poet’s *patria*, brought about by Mars, whose *patria* it is also, and by his own efforts under arms (*si merui modo*).²³

Outside hymnody however Marullus had no place for divine aid. At the end of *E* 3.47 (*Ad Manilium Rhallum*), where he again addresses the fellow-exile with whose complaints he was so impatient in *E* 1.63, he introduces the possibility of specific foreign intervention.²⁴ His theme is impermanence (*non omnis ... per dies*), demonstrated with examples from nature and the lives of great persons from the past, Croesus, Priam and Romulus, and recalling Horace’s treatment of the theme of *non semper* in *c.* 2.9, where it is exemplified by bad weather (1–8) and the early deaths of Antilochos and Troilos (13–17).²⁵ In every instance in Marullus a good state of affairs has changed, or may change, for the worse (1–8; 13–20). Rhallus and he have known good times thanks to the distinction of their country and families (10), but now – and it is no cause for surprise – they too are facing change (12). The last stanza however takes an optimistic turn. A ‘better outcome’ may await them (21). One must live in whatever home the gods please – although under Caesar’s auspices the poet does not give up hope even of his ancestral home:

quamvis auspice ego Caesare nec larem
despero patrium mihi (23–24)²⁶

‘Caesar’ is Maximilian, king of the Romans since 1486, who succeeded his father, Emperor Frederick III, in 1493. Readers of *s* had met Maximilian in three poems while

23 Cf. C. Harrauer, *Kosmos und Mythos : die Weltgotthymnen und die mythologischen Hymnen des Michael Marullus* (Vienna 1994) 409, who however connects *merui* with the hymn itself. Sudden death: Enenkel, ‘Todessehnsucht’, 415; Chomarat, *Hymnes*, 121, who refers to the poet’s (unattested) ‘combats contre les Turcs’, 126.

24 Contrast the condemnation in *E* 3.37.37–46 of the acceptance of foreign help in 1453.

25 In both poems the third stanza separates natural and human examples, with *tu* (Horace) and *Malli* (Marullus) occurring in line 9 of each.

26 It is impossible to establish the relative chronology of *E* 3.47 and the hymns to Mercury and Mars. I have arranged them to show an increasingly specific desire to return to Greece, but the temptation to infer a biographical development from this should be resisted. Without revealing what ‘early’ *res* he finds in *E* 3.47, Perosa puts it in the same category as 3.37, *Edition*, p. X and n. 12. Cf. also n. 13 above; 42 below.

Book III of the *Epigrammata* ends with *De Maximiliano Caesare* (3.53), which centres on his detention by the people of Bruges in 1488 and narrow escape from execution (3–8). At the end (19–24), in contrast to the humbled sacrificial victim of the opening (*flexo veluti victima poplite*, 4) and the forbearing king of *E* 2.5, Maximilian becomes a Herculean warrior, who with avenging hand rids the earth of monsters and their ‘savage lairs, which have for long been saturated with human blood’, a description that an advocate of crusade might well apply to a possible liberator of Greece.²⁷ In addition the poet recycled three poems in mss *BR* to or about Lorenzo il Magnifico, *E* 3.3; 12; 20 *ter*, to produce in *c* three poems to or about Maximilian, *E* 3.3; 12; 4.19. It may be presumed, with Perosa,²⁸ that the recycling was carried out after Lorenzo’s death in 1492.

Maximilian, born six years after the Fall of Constantinople, had grown up with the idea that his destiny was to lead a crusade against the Turks. The name Maximilian was chosen by his god-father, but his mother had wished to call him *Constantinum, tanquam recuperatorem regni Constantinopolitani*, while his father favoured the name of the crusader-saint George.²⁹ When he was ten years old, his father made the grand gesture of establishing an Order of St George, organised on the lines of great religious orders of knighthood like the Teutonic Knights and Templars.³⁰ Indeed Maximilian was identified by Michael Apostolis, in the course of an *Appeal* to Frederick calling for war against the Ottomans, as future emperor of a revived eastern/Byzantine empire.³¹ Much of Maximilian’s life however was to be dominated by western concerns.³² After his marriage to Maria of Burgundy in 1477 he had had to contend with the hostility of France and opposition and rebellion in the Netherlands. By the late 1480s he was an experienced military commander, and when in 1490 Innocent VIII presided over an international conference to discuss the organisation of a crusade, the pope as well as the German representatives

27 Cf. Jason Maynus’s *Epithalamion* for Maximilian and Bianca Maria Sforza in M. Freher (and B.G. Struvius), *Rerum Germanicarum scriptores aliqui insignes* II (Strassburg 1717) (henceforth Freher, II) 468–75 at 474.

28 Perosa, *Edition*, Index nominum, s.v. Medices Laurentius, *Petri filius*. On the other hand Carol Kidwell discussing *E* 4.19 thinks not of recycling, but of the sending out contemporaneously of appropriate versions to both addressees, who ‘were extremely unlikely to compare notes’, *Marullus. Soldier Poet of the Renaissance* (London 1989) (henceforth Kidwell, *Marullus*) 136–7. A clear instance of this procedure would make the suggestion more plausible.

29 Cf. Freher, II 470: *Concepisti tacitus animo a teneris usque unguiculis futuram expeditionem adversus saevissimam & truculentissimam Turcarum insolentiam*. On the subject of the child’s name see Walter Winkelbauer, ‘Kaiser Maximilian I. und St. Georg’, *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 7 (1954) 524–6, with a quotation from Maximilian’s Latin autobiography, 526, n. 7.

30 For the importance of St George to Frederick and Maximilian see Karl Schmid, ‘“Andacht und Stift”. Zur Grabmalplanung Kaiser Maximilians I.’ in Karl Schmid and Joachim Wollasch (eds.), *Memoria. Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter* (Munich 1984) 750–71 at 758–9 and, for literature, nn. 37–8.

31 B. Laourda, ‘Η πρὸς τὸν Φρειδερίκον Γ’ ἑκκλησις τοῦ Μιχαὴλ Ἀποστόλη’ in *Γέρας Ἀντωνίου Κεραμοπούλου* (Athens 1953) 516–27. I am grateful to Alexander Riehle for alerting me to the existence of this work.

32 Cf. H. Wiesflecker, *Maximilian*, V (Munich 1986) 412–13; cf. I (Munich 1971) 389–95 (henceforth Wiesflecker, *Maximilian*, V, and Wiesflecker, *Maximilian*, I, respectively).

favoured a Habsburg commander-in-chief–Frederick or, more plausibly, his son.³³ For Maximilian the task would not be easy: he lacked an eastern power-base and was not on good terms with his father, whose strategic priorities differed from his, while Matthaues Corvinus of Hungary controlled much Habsburg territory.³⁴ Maximilian established himself in Tirol, where in 1490 Duke Sigismund abdicated in his favour, and exploited Corvinus's death in the same year by recovering Habsburg lands in Austria and having some success in Hungary. But still feeling threatened by France, he married Anne of Brittany by proxy in December 1490 in order to prevent Charles VIII annexing her lands. The coup ended in humiliation and hostilities that hindered the pursuit of a more active policy in the east, so that when Hungary came under Ottoman attack in 1492, Maximilian's aid was more diplomatic than military. But in May 1493 his representatives at Senlis reached an agreement with France, and if the lengthy marriage negotiations with Ludovico Sforza of Milan for the hand of his niece, Bianca Maria, proved successful, Maximilian could look forward to an immense dowry that would help pay for an expedition. Meanwhile he imposed heavy taxes and encouraged the manufacture of arms. Conditions for decisive intervention in the Balkans in 1493 seemed favourable.

But it was the Ottomans who seized the initiative that summer, heavily defeating a Croatian army. In spite of his father's death on 19 August and the need to secure the succession and deal with manifold business arising from a change of ruler, Maximilian reacted energetically, overhauling and expanding the Order of St George and strengthening defences in the south-east. He stationed some of his forces to defend Lower Austria and Carniola, but located his main strength in north-west Hungary, where his hopes of being joined by the army of Wladislaw II and then marching against the Ottomans came to nothing in the face of suspicion and hostility on the part of the Hungarian estates.³⁵ Maximilian had not inflicted a defeat, but he had shown himself capable of responding decisively to Ottoman aggression.

During the winter of 1493–4 he strengthened his strategic position and finances by personally signing the accord with France made at Senlis and by marrying Bianca Maria. Senlis gave him reassurance about his western frontiers, and his alliance with Sforza brought money and made a statement about imperial interest in Italy.³⁶ In conversations with French representatives at his father's funeral he made clear his desire for a lasting peace with France so that he could pursue his ambitions in regard to Hungary and the Turks. After a long delay in joining his new wife in Innsbruck, the wedding festivities

33 Sigismondo dei Conti da Foligno, *Le storie de' suoi tempi dal 1475 al 1512*, II (Rome 1883) (henceforth 'dei Conti, *Storie*, II') 426–31.

34 The following account of Maximilian's campaign is based on H. Wiesflecker's paper, 'Maximilians Türkenzug 1493/94' (henceforth Wiesflecker, 'Türkenzug'), *Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft* 5 (1958) 152–78.

35 Wiesflecker, 'Türkenzug', 164.

36 For Italy in Maximilians's plans see Wiesflecker, *Maximilian*, I 396–8; II (Munich 1975) (henceforth 'Wiesflecker, *Maximilian*, II'). 9–26; 419–21; *Maximilian*, V 514–18; 766–7; H. Angermeier, *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Maximilian I.* (RTA mittlere Reihe 5) Bd. I, Teil 1, *Reichstagsakten von Worms 1495* (henceforth Angermeier, *Worms*) 25–9; 39; 42–6.

began in March 1494. Here at last was an occasion when a war of liberation might plausibly be proclaimed. And the Milanese ambassador was the man to do it.

At the end of his *Epithalamion* for Maximilian and Bianca Maria, Jason Maynus speaks of the bridegroom's response to the previous year's defeat.³⁷ As soon as his famous name even from a distance thundered in Turkish ears, they basely fled. Maximilian, he continued, was far from pleased: he wanted fighting at close quarters and a famous victory, and his greatest fear was that the Turks would fear him too much.³⁸ Up to the present his success has been glorious, but what he has now begun is beyond anyone else's powers. He alone (under divine auspices of course) will finish a campaign that is not for the greatness of the empire, but for the propagation of divine and Christian religion.³⁹ He alone will snatch the Christian people from the savage jaws of the Turk.⁴⁰ For the first time perhaps there appeared to be a real prospect of a serious Habsburg offensive against the Ottomans.

Marullus, who had shown knowledge of Maximilian's activities in the Low Countries, is unlikely to have been unaware of the more active policy being pursued in a region much closer to Italy.⁴¹ A declaration at this time (around March 1494) of hope in Maximilian as liberator seems not unlikely.⁴²

But Maximilian was not the only ruler promising war against the Ottomans.

The lineage of Charlemagne⁴³

E 4.34 bears witness to the receipt by the poet of a pressing letter (*urgentiores litterae*) from his friend, the Neapolitan political exile Antonello Sanseverino, Prince of Salerno, asking him to cross the Alps at top speed in order to participate in 'the descent' on Italy (*la calata*) of Charles VIII of France, which began in early September

37 Freher, II 473–4.

38 Freher, II 474.

39 Freher, II 474; earlier however, at 473, Maynus says that Ludovico can be useful to Maximilian *pro imperio redintegrando et amplificando*.

40 Freher, II 474. 'Savage jaws' belongs to the realm of *immanitas*, identified by J. Hankins as a recurring theme in Renaissance descriptions of Turks, 'Renaissance crusaders: humanist crusade literature in the age of Mehmed II', *DOP* (1995) 111–207 at 122 and n. 28; 131. For a comparable description of western enemies of Maximilian see above, p. 233.

41 Communication between Austria and Italy was not slow: Maynus seems to have promised Cardinal Peraudi a fair copy of his speech, presumably in Innsbruck around 16th March. On 8th April Peraudi sent him a reminder from Verona (Freher, II 475).

42 Knowing when the texts of the poem in *BR* were copied would give a *terminus ad quem* for its composition, thus providing a date by which Maximilian had become for Marullus a possible liberator. Enenkel's (unexplained) dating of the 'Niederschrift der Handschriften des 3. Buches' as 'jedenfalls vor Ende 1494' ('Todessehnsucht' 421) is compatible with the date for E 3.47 proposed above. Perosa however thinks the poem is 'early' (above, n. 26) and places the date of presentation to Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco of the whole 'libro a sé stante', which was to become *Epigrammata* III in *c*, between summer 1489 and April 1492, 'Studi' 137 (= *Stud. fil. uman.* III 212).

43 E 4.32.1, *invicte, Magni, rex, Caroli genus*.

1494. He complied.⁴⁴ Charles was successful in his first objective, the conquest of the *Regno*, from which he declared he would lead an expedition against the Ottomans, and Marullus wrote six poems arising from his enterprise.

The temptation to infer from this narrative that the poet's hope in Maximilian was displaced in the course of 1494 by a new commitment to Charles should be resisted. Sanseverino had escaped from the *Regno* in 1487 and by 1489 was at the French court, encouraging an attack on Naples.⁴⁵ In the same year the poet moved from Rome to Florence, where in the main he sought the company of pro-French Florentines like the sons of Pierfrancesco de' Medici, Lorenzo and Giovanni.⁴⁶ For Marullus as Sanseverino's friend and opponent of the ruling dynasty in Naples support for France was natural; for Marullus as Greek exile the prospect of Charles leading a crusade after the conquest of Naples could not but be highly attractive. It was not necessarily a question of choosing between Charles and Maximilian: a combined attack from central Europe and the *Regno* would have been in line with the strategy envisaged at the meeting convened by Innocent VIII in 1490 to make plans for a crusade.⁴⁷ Initially indeed Maximilian seems to have been well disposed to Charles's intervention.⁴⁸ It would however be hardly surprising if Marullus with his Neapolitan connections and probable awareness in the course of 1494 that Maximilian was facing serious Ottoman aggression and had received a desperate appeal from Croatia⁴⁹ regarded Charles as the more hopeful prospect. His progress in Italy could only have confirmed that judgement.

Like Maximilian, Charles had inherited a commitment to crusading. In 1475 his father Louis XI had prayed that his son, then six years old, might have the opportunity

44 E 4.34.5–6; 71–4. In 'Studi' 134 and 141 (= *Studi. fil. uman.* III 210 and 215) Perosa puts Marullus's departure in the spring of 1494.

45 M. Mallett, 'Personalities and pressures: Italian involvement in the French invasion of 1494', in D. Abulafia, ed., *The French descent into Renaissance Italy 1494–95. Antecedents and effects* (Aldershot 1995) 151–63 at 155.

46 For these and their secretary Zenobio Acciaiuoli (E 1. 54.2; 3.20 *bis*) see M. Plaisance, 'L'invenzione della croce de Lorenzo de' Medici (1463–1503) et le mythe du second Charlemagne' (henceforth Plaisance, 'Second Charlemagne') in M. Ballestero et al., *Culture et religion en Espagne et en Italie aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles* (Abbeville 1980) 43–66 at 45–53; McGann, 'Spartanus' 198.

47 K.M. Setton, *The Papacy and the Levant (1204–1571)* II (Philadelphia 1978) 413–16; cf. III (Philadelphia 1984) 177 for Leo X's proposals in 1517.

48 For an analysis of the complications of Maximilian's attitude to France at this time see Angermeier, *Worms*, 26–7, and for a rather different view Wiesflecker, 'Türkenzug' 171–3; cf. also the mention of Maximilian in the scenario put before Commynes by the Venetian doge as late as November 1495, below pp. 242–43. The conclusion of an armistice brokered by the French in spring 1495 between Wladislaw II of Hungary and the Ottomans (Angermeier, *Worms*, nos. 297–8, pp. 317–19) was a blow to Maximilian's immediate plans for a Turkish campaign and to any slight hope that he may still have had of collaborating with Charles against the Ottomans. (For his plans see his call to Christendom made in Antwerp on 15 November 1494 to announce a *Türkenzug* in the following March, Angermeier, *Worms*, no. 10, p. 108.) By 1496 Maximilian himself was an adherent of the armistice: whether representing the empire or only certain *Hauslande* is unclear, Angermeier, *Worms*, p. 317, n. 2.

49 Wiesflecker, 'Türkenzug', 171–3.

to go in person with the nobility and chivalry of his country, as he himself had intended, to fight the Turks and other infidels.⁵⁰ For many years there had been prophecies about the 'last emperor', and towards the end of the fifteenth century one of these, accompanied by a commentary, declared that a French king called Charles and descended from Charlemagne would end strife in his own kingdom, conquer Italy and other places, destroy Florence, capture Rome, be crowned King of the Romans, reform the church (with the support of the pro-French Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere),⁵¹ impose Christ's law on the Muslim world, enter Jerusalem and, before dying, entrust his crown to God on the Mount of Olives.⁵² That Charles had inherited from René II of Anjou the title 'King of Jerusalem' made his role as 'last emperor' more believable.⁵³

The poem that tells of the poet's being summoned by Sanseverino to join Charles (*E* 4.34)⁵⁴ reveals a nest of Italian sympathisers with the French in Florence. Addressed to Giovanni di Pierfrancesco de' Medici, who in 1494 suffered with his brother Lorenzo at the hands of Piero de' Medici for supporting Florence's traditionally close ties with France, it sings of the beauty of Felicia della Rovere, daughter of Cardinal Giuliano, who during 1494 slipped away, like Marullus himself, to join Charles VIII and accompany him on *la calata*. (*HN* 3.2 is a kind of sequel to *E* 4.34, being a formal, but atmospheric hymn to the Moon antiphonally sung by the poet and his young servant as they leave Florence.) Another poem in Book III of the *Epigrams* (*Ad Carolum regem Franciae*, 4.32), more substantial and composed in solemn Alcaics, has as its dramatic setting the period before the French moved against Italy.⁵⁵ The first line, addressed to Charles, identifies him as a descendant of Charlemagne.⁵⁶ He is summoned by 'sad Italy' and the enslaved Christian east (5–13). In an impressively long and eloquent sentence (13–40)

50 D. Le Fur, *Charles VIII* (Paris 2006) (henceforth Le Fur, *Charles*) 255–6 and 425, citing 'Le Fur (D.), *Les impérants rois* (1996) p. 150 et suiv.', a work not noticed in his bibliography. The reference appears to be to a Paris Ouest (Nanterre) thesis entitled *Les impérants rois. Images des rois de France pendant les premières guerres d'Italie*. Cf. also Ugolino Verino's dedication of his *Carlias*, which brings together Louis, Charles and hopes of a crusade, N. Thurn (ed.), *Carlias: ein Epos des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Munich 1955) (henceforth Verino, *Carlias*) 135, lines 9–22, with doubts at p. 14.

51 See the next paragraph.

52 Le Fur, *Charles* 280–92, particularly 284–6. The prophecy with commentary is in Paris, *B.N. Fonds français* 1713. See also Plaisance, 'Second Charlemagne', 53–66; D. Weinstein, *Savonarola and Florence. Prophecy and Patriotism in the Renaissance* (Princeton 1970) (henceforth, Weinstein, *Savonarola*) *passim*.

53 Le Fur, *Charles* 287.

54 See above pp. 235–36; n. 44.

55 There is also *E* 4.26, which shows the poet as a newcomer at court.

56 Above n. 43. Cf. Verino's dedication to Charles, *Carlias* 135, lines 16–17. On the other hand Sanuto reports that in an address to Florentine ambassadors Maximilian said that everyone knew Charles was not descended *de linea Caroli Magni, sed ex Ugone Capeto invasore regni Franciae* and that the king of England was the true king of France, Sanuto, *I Diarii di Marino Sanuto*, I (Venice 1879–1902) col. 250. Maximilian could claim that the regalia used in the coronation of the German emperor had come down from Charlemagne; cf. R. Bauer, 'Zur Geschichte der sizilischen Gewänder, später Krönungsgewänder der Könige und Kaiser des Heiligen Römischen Reiches' and A. Th. Schwinger, 'Verständnis und Missverständnis, Interpretation und Missinterpretation: zur Rezeptionsgeschichte des Krönungssornats der Könige und Kaiser des

the poet asks why Charles is so slow to respond, why he keeps divine destiny waiting. If he is indifferent to eternal fame, at least the wretchedness of Christians in the east should move him—as should the example of his ancestors, who stemmed the flood of Saracens that arrogantly dared to attack France. A poem like this is however more likely to confirm policies than initiate them.⁵⁷ In the light of Marullus's desire to return home, shown in the almost certainly earlier reference to Maximilian in *E* 3.47, this poem reveals the public and political aspect of that desire, now focused on the King of France.

In his book of five *Neniae*, first published fifteen years after the poet's death, there are three connected with Charles's expedition. The first, appropriately for a book of *Lamentations*, is *On Fortune's cruelty*. While Charles has been making good progress by way of Tuscany and Rome on his march towards Naples, the poet has been travelling by sea and (but this is typical of his unfortunate life!) is now stormbound on Corsica, living on vegetables and fish among the savage natives.⁵⁸ And Lorenzo di Pierfrancesco has experienced something far worse, the loss of his seven-year-old son. While the poem understandably meets the expectations of a reader of *neniae*, it is remarkable that its gloom is in no way relieved by hopeful anticipation (in terms of its dramatic date) of victory in Naples or a sense that the poet has embarked on a voyage that may in spite of present difficulties eventually bring him to Greece and Constantinople. Indeed apart from the lines contrasting Charles's good progress on the Italian mainland with his own difficult voyage, there is no reflection in Marullus of the glory of *la calata*, when the French swept through Italy.

The second *Nenia* begins meditatively: the poet is by the Adriatic in the *Regno*, for opposite him lie his country's sweet shores (*patriae dulcia littora contra*), and he is conscious that the waters of the Bosphorus, beating powerfully on the coast of Italy (*pelage impete lhuc propulsa gravi ... plangunt*, with overtones of lamentation), and the far-straying breezes connect him with all that he has lost (1–28). But he does not look forward to making their journey in reverse. Instead he uses the charming conceit of the breezes telling one another how they have observed him in various parts of the world (29–40). Now however he is less fit for war and travel, and it is his passionate wish 'to hide (*condere*) his final days in this land' (45–8).⁵⁹ He is indeed so far from anticipating a continuation of the king's expedition on the other side of the Adriatic that even settling in the *Regno* has, thanks to 'the unholy decrees of the heaven-dwellers' (49–50), become a matter of doubt. French victories have been followed by reverses, and territory won has been abandoned (49–52). The population of the Kingdom is driven by

Continued

Heiligen Römischen Reiches' in W. Seipel, *Nobiles Officinae. Ausstellungskatalog des Kunsthistorischen Museums Wien* (Vienna 2004) 84–95 and 96–107 respectively, especially Schwinger 97–9.

57 This is how Horace's call for 'Augustan' reforms at *c.*3.6.1–4 should be read. Contrast A. Kiessling and R. Heinze, *Q. Horatius Flaccus, Oden und Epoden*⁸ (Berlin 1955) 288–9.

58 The misfortunes of the fleet contrasted with the good weather enjoyed by the king as he marched south; cf. Ser Tommaso di Silvestro, *Diarii*, ed. L. Fumi, *RIS* 15.5.2.34–5.

59 A glancing reference perhaps to the Epicurean command λάθε βιώσας.

madness, by a public rage against the French (54–5). There is nothing unpredictable about this outbreak of *insania*, which is the latest in a series of disasters that have arisen from factional rivalries and foreign intervention (57–68). In a remarkably unpartisan way the poet foresees more wars, in which Naples will pay for its 'double perfidy' in welcoming first the invading French and now the returning Aragonese (69–76).

The rest of the poem is concerned with Naples, its unhappy history, both distant and recent, its equally unhappy future, its guilty people (77) and differing styles of government adopted by its rulers (79–88). There is no return to personal matters, no further mention of retirement within the *Regno*, still less of a return to Greece. That was only a dream, as will appear in the fourth *Nenia*.

This plunges the reader *in medias res*. While the king wastes time hunting, the situation is turning against him. Though the enemy is broken, it is to be feared that he may recover his strength (indeed the poem later reveals that the process is under way), helped by the 'wrongdoing and unprincipled violence' (9–10) that the king's associates are inflicting on his friends (10–11). Meanwhile an unidentified *ille* (the reference is to Ferrante II or Ferrandino, who began the Aragonese recovery in Calabria and was welcomed back by the fickle Neapolitans in June 1495), is seizing every opportunity as a coalition against France (the Holy League of Venice), announced in March 1495, takes shape, embracing Venice, where the king's representatives have been corrupt and disloyal,⁶⁰ Milan, Pope Alexander VI and Spain (18–24). But the poet omits the ruler who in Leonello Chieragato's sermon celebrating the formation of the league is given pride of place and more space than any other signatory (being to the pope as the moon to the sun), Maximilian.⁶¹ The omission may be because Marullus was embarrassed at having once named him alone as future liberator. And yet in reminding Charles of the seriousness of his position,⁶² the poet might be expected to have at least hinted at the strategically worrying adherence of his old enemy to the league.⁶³

Turning again to the Aragonese recovery, the poet notes that Ferrandino has returned to his father's throne and now holds more land than his late conqueror (25–32). If Charles's kingdom, his princes and generals, his cities, his own honour and glory mean anything to him, if in a word he has any respect for himself, he should, the poet prays, show appropriate mettle and put delay aside (33–8). Using an image

60 For Commines's difficulties in Venice see Jean Dufournet, *La Vie de Philippe de Commines* (Paris 1969) 201–13; 219–35; 256–60.

61 dei Conti, *Storie*, II 439–44.

62 Although the treaty was said to be *ad christiani orbis et Italiae praesertim pacem ineundam confirmandamque* (dei Conti, *Storie* II 440) and Leonello does not put Charles outside the pale ('rulers who are not in the League will want to share in its glory, especially Charles, who has for long been committed to an expedition against the Turks and is now [being in Naples!] closer to them and all the more ready to become a crusader [443]'), he was its target. For secret clauses threatening the existence of France see H. Wiesflecker, 'Der Italienzug König Maximilians I. im Jahre 1496', *Carinthia I* 146 (1956) 581–619 (henceforth Wiesflecker, 'Italienzug') at 590; a conspectus of opinions on the question is offered by Angermeier, *Worms*, 196, n. 1.

63 But see the next paragraph for a possible hint at the threat posed by Maximilian.

echoing Horace's reference to the precarious task faced by Asinius Pollio in writing the history of a civil war⁶⁴ and particularly appropriate in speaking about southern Italy with its volcanic activity, he asks 'Why are you, by delaying, giving the north wind an opportunity to stir treacherous ashes?' (39–40) Here perhaps in the reference to the north wind is the allusion to Maximilian that had been absent from the review of the Holy League in lines 18–24. The situation is not hopeless: the patient must be treated while the wound can be healed and the death-dealing poison has not passed through his limbs (42–4). But the poet admits that he has abandoned his dream of once more, under Charles's auspices, seeing his country again: 'But, alas, in my madness I imagined I would some day see my country and the walls beside the deep Bosphorus when proud Scythia (i.e. the Ottomans) had under your auspices been put to flight.' (45–8) *auspice te* echoes *auspice ... Caesare* (*E* 3.47), hinting perhaps that the hopes he had reposed in a campaign led by Charles may prove hardly better founded than those he had not long before conceived for a crusade led by Maximilian.

Contrasting with those dreams is the present situation: land bought at the cost of his followers' blood is being left to the enemy, and an escape achieved by running away is counted a success (49–52). Bloodshed reappears as Marullus sarcastically tells the king to look complacently at his resources—while the fields of Campania are enriched *caede ... Gallicana* (53–6). The theme of wrongs inflicted on friends returns as Marullus asks what glory there is in a victory that destroys them. Are they to be ruined when their blood has made him lord of Italy (57–64)? The poem ends with two stanzas of warning: if Charles, who is duty-bound to save his friends, is now leaving his conquests undefended, he must know that neither men nor gods have failed him, but (the poet hates to say it!) it is he who has failed friends, good faith, gods, right, reputation, upright dealing and honour—in short he has failed himself (65–72).⁶⁵

Exile's end

Marullus spoke no more of returning to his *patria*. *Nenia* 4 had dismissed that as a mad dream (45–8), and at exactly the same point in *Nenia* 2 (45–8) he had revealed that he would be happy to end his days in the *Regno*. But apart from the process of preparing *c* for publication in Florence in 1497, it was the north of Italy that now provided employment for those 'busy wits' and soldierly skills. As well as writing a poem, probably at this time, to Elisabetta Gonzaga, Duchess of Urbino (*EV* 3), he served Caterina Sforza, ruler of Imola and Forlì, who had become the lover, and perhaps the wife, of Giovanni di Pierfrancesco.⁶⁶ In October 1499, after Giovanni's death the previous year, Marullus met

64 *c.* 2.1.7–8, *incedis per ignes / subpositos cineri doloso* ('you make your way through fire lying beneath treacherous ash'); cf. Propertius 1.5.4.

65 There is one more reflection in Marullus's poetry of his involvement with the *calata* – his rewriting of *E* 3.37.39. As this involves some rather detailed discussion of sources, I have placed it in an appendix.

66 Joyce de Vries, *Caterina Sforza and the art of appearances. Gender, art and culture in early modern Italy* (Farnham 2010) 51–3; 192–3.

Louis XII in Milan and reported to Caterina that the king had no intention of becoming involved in the affairs of the Romagna. That reassurance however did not extend to the plans of Cesare Borgia, who shortly afterwards moved against her, besieging her in her citadel at Forlì. Marullus participated in, and perhaps directed, its fiercely fought but ultimately unsuccessful defence.

Nenia 5 arises from his connection with Caterina, being addressed to her secretary, Antonio Baldraccani, on the death of his father. He has gone home, but not to his earthly *patria*. His destination is the *antiqua patria* of heaven (*H* 1.1.105; 2.60). In life he experienced an exile that ended when he returned 'to his native sky' (*patrium ad aethera*, 30). Marullus too has known that separation, and in *H* 1.5, speaking on behalf of all mankind (who are 'of holy and heavenly stock' [35]), he prays to Aeternitas to 'bring us to heaven, to which we are akin' (*cognato[que] adiice caelo*, *H* 1.5.36). But he had experienced other exiles: from Greece since childhood, from the *Regno* as a young mercenary and later in Rome, Florence, Forlì—and France. All exile ended during Holy Week 1500, when, not long after the fall of Forlì, he died, by accidental drowning, in the river Cecina. He had neither returned to Greece nor found in the *Regno* that retreat where he could turn his back on warfare and the anfractuosités of the road (*militiae ... viae erroribus*, *N* 2.45–8).

Appendix

The disappearance of Genoa (*E* 3.37.39)

At *E* 3.37.25–36 the poet draws lessons from the Fall of Constantinople, commending patriotic and courageous self-reliance on the part of outnumbered defenders. He proceeds at lines 37–40 to describe it as madness to entrust the defence of the homeland to foreigners and not to believe that for Greeks their own weapons are enough. Line 39 exists in two versions:

civilesque manus Ligurum confundere signis ('[It was madness] to mix up together companies of citizen-fighters and Genoese banners') (*mss BR*) and *ignotaque manu confundere civica signa* ('[It was madness] to mix up together citizens' banners and an unknown company') (*c*).

Why did Marullus change line 39, abandoning the forceful reference to the Genoese in *BR*, substituting *c*'s colourless 'unknown company' and arguably leaving most readers at a loss? Since he does not seem to have had any personal link with Genoa,⁶⁷ it seems reasonable to look for a political explanation.

Politically Genoa was of interest to Milan, France, Spain and the Empire. Possessed of harbour and shipbuilding facilities, it was of particular importance to Charles in the last decade of the 15th century as he planned his invasion⁶⁸ and, supposedly, his further attack on the Ottomans (and of importance to Maximilian also when he entered Italy in 1496).⁶⁹ Some twenty-five years ago I suggested that a reason for the suppression of *Ligurum* may have been the importance Genoa had acquired in the

67 There are only two other mentions of Genoa in Marullus, both referring to defeats it suffered: *E* 1.48.17; 3.3.16 (in *BR*).

68 *Mémoires de Philippe de Comines*, édité par Joseph Calmette, III (Paris 1924) (henceforth Commynes, III) 31; Y. Labande-Mailfert, *Charles VIII et son milieu, 1470–98: la jeunesse au pouvoir* (Paris 1975) (henceforth Labande-Mailfert) 241; 243; 253; 259; 260–1.

69 For the role of naval operations and Genoese facilities in Maximilian's strategy in 1496 see Weisflecker, 'Italienzug', 597, 599–600.

context of the king's plans and a consequent concern on the poet's part that he should do nothing to give offence to the city.⁷⁰

In a recent discussion of this suggestion Andreas Bihrer has offered a different explanation of the change, identifying a period of crisis in 1495, when he believes that a disappointed Marullus, 'realizing' ('Marullus sah 1495 ein') that Charles's crusading plans were 'pure propaganda' and intended only to support his ambitions in Italy, returned in disappointment to Florence, turning his back on Charles, who in that year was forced by political pressure to abandon Italy.⁷¹ Implicitly therefore Marullus no longer needed (nor would he have wished) to have regard for French interest in Genoa or for the feelings of the Genoese themselves, who in any case would still have had good reason to believe that their city was being criticised since Bihrer thinks that even after the removal of *Ligurum*, the *hostis* and *dux* of 41 and 46 could still be recognised as their own Longo – and besides his actual name still lurked in *c* in the wordplay of *longumque/Longumque* (47). Correctly describing my interpretation of the re-writing as a 'toning down' (*entschärfen*), he believes on the contrary that Marullus by accusing all foreign troops, which is how he understands *ignota manus*, 'intensifies' (*verschärfen*) the criticism of the earlier version – although it is clearly arguable that fire directed at the Genoese, a limited, named and precise target, is more intense, and damaging, than shots loosed off in the general direction of an unspecific *ignota manus*.

In considering the circumstances that lie behind the change it is important to recognise that the only sure date associated with it is a *terminus ad quem* in November 1497 (publication of *c*). It may however be presumed that the version in *c* was made after the *BR* version of the future Book III of the *Epigrams* had come into being. On the basis of the dating of *E* 3.47 proposed above a possible *terminus non ante quem* in spring 1494 might be suggested. The change would then have been made between that date and November 1497. The period of crisis that Bihrer identifies falls within this period: 1495 (or more precisely May–November 1495), when Charles left Naples and Italy for France.

But is it correct to say that at this time he also lost interest in Genoa and Italy as a whole and that the poet became alienated from him? A careful reading of the sources will show that Italy and not least Genoa remained high on Charles's agenda throughout 1495, and subsequently. Around the time of the battle of Fornovo (6th July, 1495) the French tried unsuccessfully to capture the city,⁷² and in the autumn both Genoa itself and French communications with the *Regno* bulked large among the concessions wrested from Sforza at Vercelli.⁷³ In November 1495 Charles's emissary Commynes was told in Venice by the doge that Ferrandino was prepared to let the king retain Taranto and give him other places *pour servir contre le Turc*: all Italy would help pay for the expedition, Maximilian would join in, Charles and Venice would control Italy, and there would be no opposition. Whatever the truth of the doge's words, they imply a shared assumption (or a shared readiness to appear to believe) that there was a

70 M. J. McGann, '1453', 148–50.

71 Bihrer (to whom I am grateful for leading me to look more closely at the sources), 'Exil' 24–5 and nn. 66–8, citing at n. 68 Dieter Mertens, 'Europäischer Friede und Türkenkrieg im Spätmittelalter', in Heinz Duchhardt, ed., *Zwischenstaatliche Friedenswahrung in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Cologne 1991) 45–90 at 78–83. The view that Charles's crusading statements were 'pure propaganda' had some contemporary support (Commynes comments that his declarations about attacking the Turks were lies that could not deceive God, III 249; de' Conti however allowed for change in the king's intentions: he abandoned 'all thought of war with the Turks, particularly after the death of the Ottoman Zizimus' [the pretender Cem Pasha, who died in February 1495] and devoted his efforts to obtaining *totius Italiae imperium*, *Storie*, II 111–12), but a more nuanced approach seems demanded of the historian to-day; cf. Mertens, who with reference to Maximilian recommends the avoidance of 'unangemessene Beurteilungskategorien' ('Schwindel oder nicht Schwindel'), 84, n. 142; cf. also J.-D. Müller, *Gedechtnus: Literatur und Hofgesellschaft um Maximilian I.* (Munich 1982) 288, n. 53; 374, n. 13. In any case, irrespective of plans for a crusade, the importance of Genoa to Charles lasted as long as he maintained an interest in Italy.

72 Commynes, III 52–4; H.-F. Delaborde, *L'expédition de Charles VIII en Italie* (Paris 1888), 657.

73 Commynes, III 242–3.

continuing French commitment to southern Italy and even to a crusade.⁷⁴ The record shows without doubt that at least Genoa and the *Regno* continued to figure in French planning right until the month of the king's death.⁷⁵

And the French commitment to Italy was reciprocated by the many Italians who did not regard Charles's withdrawal from Naples as final and continued well beyond 1495 to look forward to his return.⁷⁶ Just before Fornovo, according to a Ferrarese diarist, France enjoyed the support of *tuta Italia, videlicet li populi*, who shouted *ad una voce Franza, Franza*.⁷⁷ Rumours of an imminent French return circulated in Ferrara through 1496 and, less frequently, in 1497.⁷⁸ In Genoa and nearby Savona there were pro-French factions.⁷⁹ Belief in Charles's apocalyptic role as 'last emperor' was not confined to France.⁸⁰ Savonarola expected him to reform the church and destroy tyrants, and after Charles withdrew from Italy, threatened him with divine punishment if he did not return.⁸¹ Another prophet, Angelo of Vallombrosa, wrote to the lords and people of Florence in May 1496 that they should persevere in their friendship with Charles, *da Dio imperatore eletto*, since after recovering *el Constantinopolitano imperio et suoi regni* he would bring about church reunion and reform of both church and Empire.⁸² And it is perhaps possible to put Marullus himself in proximity to such ideas by noting that in 1495 Zenobio Acciaiuoli conveyed to Pietro Delphino, General of the Camaldolesi, a prophecy about the 'angelic pope', who is associated with the 'last emperor'.⁸³

Bihrer's belief that in the course of 1495 Marullus became alienated from Charles accords with a widespread view that, in the words of A. Dain, the speed with which Italians became disenchanted with Charles matched that of his conquest.⁸⁴ In the light however of A. Linder's demonstration that opinion in Italy about the prospect of Charles's return was 'complex and heterogeneous', some caution is needed.⁸⁵ It is true that Marullus says his dream of returning home has been dashed, but he never rejects Charles.⁸⁶ He speaks harshly to the king in *N* 2 and 4, but calling on him for action before it is too late (*N* 4.42–4) is not consistent with alienation. It is straight talk, not evidence of a final breach. And the two poems that he wrote after Charles's death (*EV* 13 and 14) are respectful. Indeed in 13, where he returns to the theme of Charles's tolerance of his followers' misbehaviour (cf. *N* 2.81–4; 4.9–12), he sees both sides of this policy: a failure on the one hand to exercise the severe judgement that wrongdoing demands (1–2) and on the other a display of royal clemency proving the humanity of Charles l'Affable, 'merciful and kind to his own' (*placatus mitisque suis*, 1) – not the words of a disillusioned and alienated supporter.

74 Commynes, III 249. Cf. Charles's concern in 1495 for those staying behind, his disposition of forces as he left Italy and his insistence in 1498 on holding on to Apulia, possibly as a base for a crusade, Labande-Mailfert, 446; 539.

75 Commynes, III 273–7; 277–81; 303.

76 A. Linder, 'An unpublished 'Pronosticatio' on the return of Charles VIII to Italy', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 47 (1984) (henceforth Linder, 'Pronosticatio') 200–3.

77 *Diario Ferrarese*, ed. G. Pardi, *RIS* 24.7,1 (Bologna 1920) (henceforth Pardi), pp. 353–8.

78 Pardi, 159, and, for some qualification of the diarist's pan-Italian enthusiasm, n. 5.

79 Commynes, III 277–9.

80 Above, p. 237.

81 Commynes, III 309. See also Weinstein, *Savonarola*, 278–81.

82 L. Lunetta (ed.), *Angelo da Vallombrosa, Lettere* (Florence 1997) letter 1, pp. 7–9, 11.

83 M. Reeves, *The influence of prophecy in the later Middle Ages: a study of Joachimism* (Oxford 1969, repr. Notre Dame 1993) 355–7; Weinstein, *Savonarola*, 175 and nn. 61 and 62.

84 A. Dain, *Charles VIII et les Italiens: Histoire et Mythe* (Geneva 1979) 127.

85 Linder, 'Pronosticatio', 201.

86 *N* 4.45–8. It would have been open to Bihrer to invoke the unfinished state of the *Institutiones principales* as indicating a breach between Marullus and Charles in the course of 1495, but in the absence of evidence supporting such a breach it seems best to connect the abandonment of the poem with the prince's death on 6 December 1495.

Whatever his thoughts were about a crusade or conquering all Italy, Charles never abandoned hope of securing at least the *Regno*, and Genoa remained central to his plans. And although Marullus was capable of speaking about Ferrandino without hostility and even perhaps with admiration,⁸⁷ his continuing opposition to the Aragonese did not falter. This is made clear by his dedication in *c* of the *Hymni naturales*. Instead of three poems, as in *FR*, dedicating to three members of the Medici family each of Books 1–3 of the *Hymns*,⁸⁸ Marullus in *c* prefaced the final and complete collection of four books with a single poem addressed to one of the architects of the *calata*, the ultimately irreconcilable enemy of the dynasty, Antonello Sanseverino.⁸⁹

Lastly there is Bihrer's argument that the change made by the poet is insufficient to conceal his criticism since the history of the siege was well known and the pun on Longo's name is 'obvious'.⁹⁰ It was suggested above that few among the poet's contemporaries had detailed knowledge of the Fall of Longo.⁹¹ Some of those few might, though puzzled by the absence of a reference to his leaving his post, have identified him with the help of *Ligurum*. But without an explicit reference to Genoa the passage is deeply obscure.⁹² As for the pun, neither Haskell nor Enenkel, who have recently studied the poem with the benefit of my identification of the *hostis*, displays any awareness of it.⁹³ The poet could be reasonably sure that in *c* his wordplay would escape the notice of all but a very few readers. The 'common reader' of *c*, lacking detailed knowledge of the siege, faced at lines 37–48 a general condemnation of the use of foreign troops in 1453 and a savage but puzzlingly vague attack on an unnamed person—together with a pun on his name so recherché that it seems to have lain unnoticed for half a millennium. Marullus covered his tracks with considerable success, but at some cost to the impact and comprehensibility of his poem.

87 Above, p. 239. The *rex optimus* of N 2.79–80 may be Ferrandino.

88 Cf. McGann, 'The Medicean dedications of Books 1–3 of the *Hymni Naturales* of Michael Marullus' *Res publica litterarum* 3 (1980) 87–90.

89 See G. Macchiaroli et al., *Antonello Sanseverino: dalla discesa di Carlo VIII alla capitolazione del 1497* (Naples 1999).

90 'Exil', 25.

91 Above, pp. 230–1.

92 Apparently I was the first to identify Longo's presence in the poem (Haskell, 'Tristia', 115–16; Bihrer, 'Exil', 23). Without the help of *BR*'s *Ligurum* I doubt if I would have made the connection. (An indication of the lack of specificity of these lines is that I originally thought that the *dux* of 45–6 was the emperor himself, to be distinguished from the *miles* of 41–4, McGann, '1453', 148.)

93 Thus in describing the pun as 'deutlich' Bihrer appears to underestimate his own *Scharfsinnigkeit*!

Perfectly absent: the emergence of the Modern Greek perfect in Early Modern Greek*

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This paper traces the emergence of the Standard Modern Greek perfect έχω + infinitive in the Early Modern Greek period. It shows that the construction appears in written sources towards the very end of the seventeenth century. Special attention is given to ‘phantom’ perfects, which can be found in editions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literary and non-literary texts as well as in the bibliography and which distort the picture of its emergence.

The construction έχω + infinitive, which in Classical Greek had modal force denoting mainly possibility or ability,¹ can be found expressing futurity from at least the first century AD.² Whereas at first it clearly belonged to the lower stylistic registers, during the Early Medieval period the use of this construction started to confine itself more and more to middle-register texts.³ In the Late Medieval (ca 1100–1500) and Early Modern (ca 1500–1700) periods (henceforth LMedG and EMG) its use is limited to middle- and higher-register texts, though examples have been found until as late as the

* At David Holton’s and Geoffrey Horrocks’ *Grammar of Medieval Greek Project* (University of Cambridge) over the years my colleagues Tina Lendari, Io Manolassou and Notis Toufexis and I collected a wealth of material from a vast number of non-literary and literary sources, which I have used, with gratitude, for this study. Gratitude is also due to Klaas Bentein, Arnold van Gemert, Martin Hinterberger, David Holton and Marc Lauxtermann for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this paper, as well as to Peter Mackridge and the anonymous referees of BMGS. A very warm thank you goes to Katerina Korre for her help in chasing ghosts in the *Archivio di Stato* in Venice.

1 Th. Markopoulos, *The Future in Greek* (Oxford 2009) 33–8.

2 See A. N. Jannaris, *An Historical Greek Grammar Chiefly of the Attic Dialect, etc.* (London 1897) 553, whose earliest example is from Ignatius of Antioch (1st c. AD). Jannaris deems it a scholastic construction, thus underestimating its frequency in the Medieval Greek period. F. T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, II (Milan 1981) 289 gives the following example from the early second century: οὐκ ἔχεις ἀκ[οῦ]σαι PMich. 476.12. For more examples see e.g. Jannaris, *An Historical Greek Grammar*, 553–4; S. B. Psaltes, *Grammatik der Byzantinischen Chroniken* (Göttingen 1913) 216–17; N. Bănescu, *Die Entwicklung des griechischen Futurums von der frühbyzantinischen Zeit bis zur Gegenwart* (Bucharest 1915) 78–84, and Markopoulos, *The Future*, 60–70.

3 N. Bănescu, *Die Entwicklung*, 78–81; and Markopoulos, *The Future*, 94–9.

sixteenth/seventeenth centuries.⁴ Evidently, the construction had to have been entirely obsolete as a future before it could be assigned a radically different function, namely that of the perfect.

In the bibliography the dates for the first appearance of *έχω* + infinitive as a perfect vary considerably. Chatzidakis supposes that *έχω* + infinitive did not become a perfect before the seventeenth century.⁵ Horrocks stresses that the construction is a very late development.⁶ Tonnet hypothesizes that it manifested itself towards the end of the sixteenth century, without, however, giving any examples.⁷ Setatos' earliest examples are from Glykas (12th c.) and the *Chronicle of Morea* (14th c.), but sadly none of his LMedG and EMG examples is actually a perfect.⁸ Ralli, Melissaropoulou and Tsolakidis argue that there are first attestations as early as the eleventh century in S. Italy and from the sixteenth century onwards elsewhere,⁹ and Markopoulos dates its first appearance in the sixteenth century on the basis of single examples in the notary books of Maras and Grigoropoulos and in a document from Santorini,¹⁰ but these early examples are not perfects either, as I will demonstrate below.

The *έχω* + infinitive perfect is extremely rare in the EMG period and in fact does not appear before the very end of the seventeenth century, in a geographically restricted area. The problem is that, since many modern editors do not appear to be aware of the construction's late appearance and general rarity, there are quite a few examples of *έχω* + infinitive in editions of texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that upon closer scrutiny prove to be phantoms. One such phantom that has already been 'exposed' concerns an example in the fourteenth-century *Chronicle of Morea*¹¹ quoted

4 See [M. C. Janssen], 'Verb morphology' in D. W. Holton, G. C. Horrocks, M. C. Janssen, S. Lendari, I. Manolissou and N. Toufexis, *The Cambridge Grammar of Medieval and Early Modern Greek* (forthcoming).

5 G. N. Chatzidakis, *Μεσαιωνικά και Νέα Ελληνικά*, I (Athens 1917) 600 (henceforth MNE, I). However, Chatzidakis is mistaken when he claims that the construction can be found in Cretan literature, as pointed out by I. Manolissou, 'Μεσαιωνική γραμματική και μεσαιωνικές γραμματικές', in G. K. Mavromatis and N. Agiotis (eds), *Πρόοιμη νεοελληνική δημόδης γραμματεία. Πρακτικά του 6ου Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Neograeca Medii Aevi* (Ioannina, 29 Sept.–2 Oct. 2005) (Herakleion 2012) 300.

6 G. C. Horrocks, *Greek. A History of the Language and its Speakers*, 2nd edn (Chichester and Malden, MA 2010) 297, 300–1, 387 and 425.

7 H. Tonnet, *Histoire du grec moderne: la formation d'une langue* (Paris 1993) 107.

8 M. Setatos, 'Ο νεοελληνικός παρακείμενος', *Επιστημονική Επετηρίδα της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Αριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης. Περίοδος 2. Τεύχος Τμήματος Φιλολογίας* 3 (1993) 506. The examples from Glykas are futures, whereas those from the *Chronicle* are futuristic subjunctives, for which see W. J. Aerts, *Periphrastica. An Investigation into the Use of εἶναι and ἔχειν as Auxiliaries or Pseudo-auxiliaries in Greek from Homer up to the Present Day* (Amsterdam 1965) 182 and Markopoulos, *The Future*, 149–55.

9 See A. Ralli et al., 'Ο παρακείμενος στη νέα ελληνική και στις διαλέκτους: παρατηρήσεις για τη μορφή και την εξέλιξή του', *Μελέτες για την Ελληνική Γλώσσα* 27 (2007) 361–72. For a discussion of these instances see examples 1, 10, 18 and 19 below.

10 Markopoulos, *The Future*, 147–8. For a discussion see examples 3, 4 and 14 below.

11 J. Schmitt (ed.), *The Chronicle of Morea* (London 1904).

incorrectly in W. J. Aerts' PhD dissertation: *από την Πόλιν έχει ελθεί* (v. 4901) (the text actually reads *είχε ελθεί*).¹² But in fact there are many more phantoms lurking around in editions of both literary and non-literary texts, either because the edition is generally unreliable, or as a result of rare misinterpretations or misreadings in otherwise sound editions (see below). These phantoms are easy traps for the linguist to fall into and they distort the history of the construction's emergence. It must be said, though, that editors are not responsible for all the phantoms that can be found in the bibliography; some of them are the result of misinterpretation by linguists themselves.

Another thing that tends to obfuscate the picture of the emergence of the *έχω* + infinitive perfect is the unfortunate practice in many linguistic studies of making no clear distinction between the past perfect (pluperfect) and the present perfect (perfect).¹³ Such an approach may be defensible for the *έχω/είχα* + perfect passive participle constructions, which show comparable developments for past and present,¹⁴ but not for the constructions with the infinitive. In Ancient Greek the construction *είχον* + infinitive had expressed obligation-in-the-past and it began to be used in conditional contexts expressing ability/possibility-in-the-past (counterfactual) in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.¹⁵ From there it evolved, via hypothetical anteriority, to temporal anteriority, in other words to a pluperfect expressing anteriority in the past.¹⁶ It first appears as an unambiguous pluperfect in written texts of the fourteenth century.¹⁷ Early examples

12 This unfortunate mistake in Aerts, *Periphrastica*, 182, was adopted by R. Browning in his authoritative *Medieval and Modern Greek*, 2nd edn (Cambridge 1983) 80, and thus in many studies after him, including the Grammar devoted to the *Chronicle*: J. M. Egea, *Gramática de la Crónica de Morea un estudio sobre el griego medieval* (Vitoria 1988) 78. Although the mistake was already pointed out as early as 1997 by G. C. Horrocks, *Greek. A History of the Language and its Speakers* (New York 1997) 231, and although Aerts rectified it in his lexicon of the *Chronicle* (W. J. Aerts and H. Hokwerda, *Lexicon on the Chronicle of Morea* (Groningen 2002) 199), the example lingered on in the secondary bibliography until quite recently.

13 So, among others, the classic studies on the perfect periphrases, Aerts, *Periphrastica* and A. Moser, *The History of the Perfect Periphrases in Greek*, unpublished PhD dissertation, Cambridge 1988. Neither scholar distinguishes between *έχω* + infinitive and *είχα* + infinitive, even though the two constructions followed rather different paths of development, as already noted by Chatzidakis, MNE, I, 598–609.

14 See [Janssen], 'Verb morphology'.

15 Markopoulos, *The Future*, 70–2.

16 Chatzidakis, MNE, I, 598–609, followed among others by Aerts, *Periphrastica*; Moser, *The History*; G. C. Horrocks, 'On condition ...: Aspect and modality in the history of Greek', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 41 (1995) 169–70; and Horrocks, *Greek* (2nd edn), 300–1.

17 The earliest example quoted in Markopoulos, *The Future*, 158: *από τον ευγενήν άνθρωπον ... είχεν δοθείν γης του αυτού Οικονόμου* (taken from F. Miklosich and J. Müller, *Acta et diplomata Graeca medii aevi: sacra et profana, collecta et edita*, VI (Vienna 1890) CII.1–2) cannot provide conclusive proof for a thirteenth-century dating. The document is a Greek translation of a 1296 (not 1295) Latin original (= Miklosich/Müller, *Acta*, VI, App. I, 1, 387–8) (for the date, January 1295 according to the Venetian calendar, see Ch. Maltezou, 'Τα λατινικά έγγραφα του Πατριαρχικού Αρχείου', *Σύμμεικτα* 2 [1970] 351). It is unknown when the Greek translation was made, and although it cannot be excluded that it is contemporary with the Latin original, it has come down to us in a seventeenth-century copy; see the edition of the same document by I. Sakellion, 'Απογραφή των εν τη Μονή της Πάτμου σωζομένων επισήμων εγγράφων', *Pandora* 19 (1869)

include a document written in Egypt and various instances in the *Chronicle of Morea* (date of the oldest ms (H) ca. 1375): *ὅτι εἶχεν αποστείλειν αὐτόν ὁ ἡγιασμένος Σουλτάν ὁ Μελλήκ Νάσαρ* (1349, Egypt)¹⁸ ‘because the holy Sultan Melik Nasar had sent him’; *καθὼς τοὺς εἶχε ὁμόσει* (*Chron. Mor.* H v. 81) ‘as he had sworn to them’.¹⁹

The function of the perfect had long been taken over by the aorist indicative.²⁰ In LMedG and EMG it is often used where Modern Greek would use a perfect. Consider for instance the following example from Angelos Soumakis’ *Το ρεμπελιό των ποπολάρων* (17th c.): *διότι τὸ ἐργὸς ἐτοῦτο δὲν ἐγίνε ἄλλη φορὰ, διὰ τὸ ὁποῖον θέλει τοὺς φανεῖ δύσκολο* (p. 37, l. 2–3)²¹ ‘because this has not been done before, and therefore it will seem difficult to them’. Furthermore, there was the construction *έχω* + perfect passive participle (*έχω γραμμένο(ν)* or, with an undeclined participle, *έχω γραμμένα*), which was used to express an action/event in the past that results in a state in the present, with a strong focus on the resulting state. It has a more limited use than the Modern Greek *έχω* + infinitive perfect, as it is usually used only with transitive verbs and an overt direct object.²² Consider the following examples from *Assizes* (version B, ms 15th c.) and the Cretan tragedy *Erofilī* (16th c.): *εκείνος οὐοὺ ἔχει τὸ πρᾶγμα* *χαμένο* (*Assizes* B, p. 426, l. 22) ‘he who has lost the thing’ (i.e. no longer has it);²³ *στρατιώτῃ πλὶα προθυμερό δὲν ἔχω γνωρισμένα* (*Erofilī*, Act II, v. 372) ‘I have never met a more dedicated soldier’ (i.e. I do not know).²⁴ This construction is used as a resultative perfect in a large geographical area from at least the fifteenth century onwards.²⁵

Let us now turn to *έχω* + infinitive. What to make of the following eleventh-century example from S. Italy, which is often quoted as an early, though sometimes labelled ‘dubious’,²⁶ example of the perfect? With this document Roger I of Sicily donates a substantial number of Greek serfs to the newly-founded monastery of the hermits at

Continued

459, and note that the later copy displays other innovations that are not thirteenth-century, such as the form *ήτοεν* for *ήτον*.

18 L. Schopen and B. Niebuhr, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni ex imperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, III (Vienna 1832) 97, l. 8–9. Diplomatic letter from the Mamluk Sultan of Egypt Al-Nasir Hasan to John VI Kantakouzenos. The provenance of the Greek scribe is unknown.

19 For more information see [Janssen], ‘Verb morphology’.

20 P. Chantraine, *Histoire du parfait grec* (Paris 1927) 245.

21 D. Konomos, *Ζακυνθινά χρονικά (1485–1953)* (Athens 1970) 27–59.

22 Only the construction with the invariable participle in *–α* is occasionally used with intransitive verbs, e.g. *θε νά ’χεις διψασμένα* (*Erofilī*, *Intermedio* I, v. 175); see [Janssen], ‘Verb morphology’.

23 K. N. Sathas (ed.), *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη ἢ συλλογή ἀνεκδότων μνημείων τῆς ἐλληνικῆς ιστορίας*, VI (Venice and Paris 1877).

24 S. Alexiou and M. Aposkiti (eds), *Ερωφίλη, τραγωδία Γεωργίου Χορτάση* (Athens 1988).

25 It first appears in areas that were under western rule, the earliest example being from S. Italy: (*το χωράφιον...*) *τὸ ἄπερ καὶ ἔχω αγορασμένο* (no. 13, l. 13–14; 1005, S. Italy) in F. Trinchera, *Syllabus Graecarum membranarum, etc.* (Naples 1865). It is absent from twelfth- to fourteenth-century texts and the earliest unambiguous examples outside Italy can be found in *Assizes* B (15th-c. ms), the *War of Troy* (15th–16th-c. mss) and fifteenth-century Cretan documents; see [Janssen], ‘Verb morphology’.

26 Manolessou, ‘Μεσαιωνική γραμματική’, 302.

Stilo; the document ends with a stipulation regarding ‘strangers (i.e. new serfs) who come to the land of the hermits’:

- (1) στέργω δε συ<ν> και μετά τούτων όλους τους ξένους τους ερχομένους εις την χώραν των ερημιτών του έχειν σας αυτούς ακωλύτως, διότι έχουν ακκουμανδευθείν εις εσάς (1097, S. Italy).²⁷

This example is classified as a perfect indicative in Caracausi’s lexicon of S. Italian Greek as well as in Minas’ grammar.²⁸ However, it is much more likely to be a future than a perfect; an attempt, in fact, to translate the future perfect of the Latin parallel text at a time when the Greek language had no means of expressing a future perfect: qui se voluerint eis comendare, ‘who will have wished to entrust themselves to them’. In other words, the Greek text means ‘I concede [that] all strangers who come to the land of the hermits are yours without hindrance, because they will entrust themselves to you’, rather than ‘because they have entrusted themselves to you’, as at the moment of granting the privilege, the arrival of strangers lies in the future. Another example that has rightly been labelled ‘dubious’²⁹ occurs in the sixteenth-century Paris manuscript of the *Chronicle of Morea*:

- (2) κι αφότου γαρ του έδωκεν εγράφως τα συνήθεια, | οπού τα έχει επάρχειν εκείνος <ο> αδελφός του (v. 2613) ‘and after giving him the local customs, which his brother *has brought [from Jerusalem]’.

First of all, the actual manuscript reading is quite unclear: όπου τὰ ἔχει ἐπάρην.αι [κ.ι] κήν ως ἀδελφός του.³⁰ Secondly, the fourteenth-century Copenhagen manuscript of the chronicle (H) has a pluperfect of the type ἡμουν + gerund: ενώ τα ἦτον ἐπάροντα, ‘which he had brought’.³¹ Throughout the text the scribe of ms P systematically changes this construction with the gerund to εἶχα + infinitive.³² I therefore think Aerts rightly assumed that this is a writing mistake and proposed to read εἶχε επάρχειν.³³

27 Trinchera, *Syllabus*, no. 60, l. 36–9. Note that Spyridon Zambelios edits the same document but offers a completely different, quite nonsensical reading (ακουσμένως?): διότι ακουσμένως έχουν δεθείν εις εσάς; see S. Zambelios, *Ιταλοελληνικά, ήτοι πραγματεία περί των εν τοις αρχείοις της Νεαπόλεως ανεκδότων ελληνικών περιγραμνών* (Athens 1864) 159.

28 G. Caracausi, *Lessico greco della Sicilia e dell’Italia meridionale (secoli X–XIV)* (Palermo 1990) s.v. ακκουμανδεύω. Minas gives the example in Zambelios’ version (see previous footnote), suggesting that δεθείν should be interpreted as δοθείν: K. Minas, *Η γλώσσα των δημοσιευμένων μεσαιωνικών ελληνικών εγγράφων της Κάτω Ιταλίας και της Σικελίας* (Athens 1994) 124.

29 Manolossou, ‘Μεσαιωνική γραμματική’, 302.

30 Ms. Par. gr. 2898, fol. 148v; after ἐπάρην.αι with its curious dot, there are two or three letters in blotted ink, the first one possibly <κ>, the last one perhaps <ι>.

31 For this periphrasis see now Th. Giannaris, ‘Pluperfect periphrases in Medieval Greek: a perspective on the collaboration between linguistics and philology’, *Transactions of the Philological Society* 109:3 (2011) 232–45. See also [Janssen], ‘Verb morphology’.

32 The scribe of ms P tends to add –(ν)ε to the infinitive whenever he needs an extra syllable, e.g. ἦτον ερωτήσουντα *Chron. Mor.* H 5770 – εἶχεν ερωτήσσεινε *Chron. Mor.* P 5770.

33 Aerts and Hokwerda, *Lexicon*, 199.

Other examples in editions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts mostly fall into the category of phantom forms. The following examples (3–9) are all the result of unfortunate misreadings by the respective editors. Ostensibly the earliest example of the construction is a single occurrence in the notarial acts of Grigoropoulos:

- (3) αφήνω της Άννας Μονοβασιώτισσας [...] υπέρπυρα εκατόν εξήντα απάνω εις εκείνα τα στάμμενα απού της έχω γραύει εις τους κριτάδες (1518, Crete)³⁴ ‘I leave to Anna Monovasiotissa [...] one hundred and sixty *hyperpyra*, on top of the money I have already bequeathed her at the judges’ office’.

However, the document in fact reads έχω γραμμένα.³⁵

In the following instance in the notarial acts of Maras [έ]χω turns out to be a misreading for [εί]χα:³⁶

- (4) λάδι μίστατα εκατόν, οπού χω αγοράσει ... το οποίον λάδι ήβαλα εισέ συντροφιάν εσένα τον λεγόμενον κυρ Δημήτρη και επήγες και επήρες και επούλησές το (1549, Crete)³⁷ ‘one hundred *mistata* of oil, which I *have bought ... which I put into the partnership with you, Mr Dimitris, and then you went and took some and sold it on’.

The next example is one of many misreadings by the editor of *Pistikos Voskos*:

- (5) το στόμα που την έχει δοκιμάσει (Act II, Scene 1, v. 229).³⁸ The actual manuscript reading (not in the app. crit.) is: το στόμα που τηνή χε δοκημάση (= την είχε δοκιμάσει) ‘the mouth that tasted her’.³⁹

So are the following examples in *Deftera Parousia* (15th c.), as becomes clear from the facsimiles provided in the edition (fols 122^v and 123^v). In each instance the manuscript reads νά χε(ν) (= να είχε(ν)), as one would expect in the case of counterfactual conditionals, not νά χει (spelled νά χη in the polytonic ed.):

- (6) μακάριον τε το χάλασες να τό χες αφανίσει, | μήνα χε φύγει θάνατον (v. 271-2) ‘would that you had exterminated that which you ruined, so that it might have

34 S. Kaklamanis and S. Lambakis, *Μανουήλ Γρηγορόπουλος, νοτάριος Χάνδακα 1506–1533: διαθήκες, απογραφές, εκτιμήσεις* (Herakleion 2003) no. 50, l. 18–19.

35 I am very grateful to Dr Lambakis, who confirmed this in a personal communication.

36 In Maras’ script <α> and <ω> at the end of the word, though distinguishable, look quite similar. I am much indebted to Dr Drakakis for providing the Grammar of Medieval Greek Project with a copy of the relevant page.

37 T. Marmareli and M. G. Drakakis, *Μιχαήλ Μαράς, Νοτάριος Χάνδακα. Κατάστιχο 149. Τόμος Γ’ (1 Ιουλίου–28 Σεπτεμβρίου 1549)* (Herakleion 2006) no. 59, l. 5–7.

38 P. Joannou, *Ο Πιστικός Βοσικός. Der treue Schäfer. Der Pastor Fido des G. B. Guarini von einem Anonymus im 17. Jahrhundert in kretische Mundart übersetzt* (Berlin 1962).

39 Here είχε δοκιμάσει is equivalent not to a pluperfect but to an aorist; cf. examples 10 and 11.

escaped death' and να 'χεν αστράψει ουρανός, νά 'χε καείν η ώρα (v. 299)⁴⁰ 'would that lightning had lit the sky, would that the moment had gone up in flames'.

In the correspondence from the northern mainland published (fragmentarily) by K. D. Mertzios,⁴¹ there are five examples of the construction. However valuable Mertzios' work may be for material historians, for linguists it poses a problem, as Mertzios appears to have struggled to decipher the manuscripts and was clearly more interested in the content of documents than their precise wording. The texts are therefore far from reliable, and in fact only one of the instances has been securely identified as a perfect (example 23).⁴² The following two examples are actually pluperfects:

- (7) ότι μ' έχει γελάσει πως σου τα έδωσεν (1697, Kastoria)⁴³. The manuscript has: με έχεν γελάσι (= με έχεν γελάσει)⁴⁴ 'because he had deceived me [saying] that he gave [the money] to you'.
- (8) διά εκείνα τα εκατόν τζεκίνια οπού μας έχεις γράψει ... δεν μου τα έδωσεν (1697, Kastoria),⁴⁵ which in fact reads: ήγες γράψη (= είχες γράψει) 'as for the one hundred sequins you had written to us about ... he did not give them to me'.
- (9) The following example: και ημείς του δίνομεν εκείνο το δώρον που έχομεν συμφωνήσει (1706, Siatista, Macedonia)⁴⁶ is nothing more than Mertzios' own paraphrase and has an altogether different reading in the original: κε εμής του δήνομεν εκήνο το δώρος που έχομεν αδέτη (= και εμείς του δίνομεν εκείνο το δώρος που έχομεν αδέτι) (< Turk. âdet, 'custom') 'and we give [the Consul's Secretary] the [yearly] gift as is our custom'.

40 B. Schartau, 'Δευτέρα Παρουσία διά στίχου – The Second Coming of Christ in rhyme. The text of Cod. Vind. hist. gr. 119, ff. 116–25 edited with an introduction, English translation, and index verborum', *Scandinavian Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 3 (2005) 7–75.

41 K. D. Mertzios, 'Κεφάλαιον Ζ': Εμπορική αλληλογραφία εκ Μακεδονίας (1695–1699)', in *Μνημεία μακεδονικής ιστορίας* (Thessaloniki 1947) 209–64.

42 I am deeply indebted to Katerina Korre, who gave up more of her time than I had ever hoped necessary to investigate these forms in the *Archivio di Stato* in Venice. She provided me with accurate transcriptions of the relevant passages and information on the whereabouts of the documents. The Archive was reorganized in the 1980s. As a result, the documents as edited by Mertzios have been assigned different file numbers, and some have been moved to different files. One of the letters, Mertzios' no. 33, appears to have been misplaced and could not be found in the *Documenti Greci*, nor in the *Documenti Turchi* or *Documenti Armeni*. For the unverified example from this letter see example 24.

43 Mertzios, 'Εμπορική αλληλογραφία', no. 68, l. 10–11. The document, dated 23 June 1697, is now filed as *Documenti Greci*, busta 2, no. 108; it is a duplicate of no. 109, dated 03 June 1697.

44 Note that the absence of the /i/-augment in the imperfect of έχω is not uncommon in the EMG period. For details see [Janssen], 'Verb morphology'.

45 Mertzios, 'Εμπορική αλληλογραφία', no. 71, l. 5–6. The document is now filed in *Documenti Greci*, busta 2, no. 136.

46 K. D. Mertzios, 'Κεφάλαιον Θ': Από το αρχείον του εν Δυρραχίω Προξενείου της Βενετίας (1700–1779)', in *Μνημεία μακεδονικής ιστορίας*, 269, l. 5–6. The document is now filed in *Cinque savi alla mercanzia*, Prima serie, busta 661.

Other examples of phantoms include misinterpretations whereby past forms of *έχω* are interpreted as present. This category includes an oft-quoted single example in the seventeenth-century Cretan play *Fortounatos* by Markos Antonios Foskolos. However, this form is not a perfect: *’χετε* stands for *είχετε*, not *έχετε*, and the construction is semantically equivalent to the aorist indicative:⁴⁷

- (10) ευκαριστιές σας δίδομε ... για την καλήν ακρόασι οπού *’χετε* μας δώσει (Act V, v. 409-11)⁴⁸ ‘we thank you (i.e. the audience) ... for the good listening-to that you gave us’.

A similar example can be found in *Pistikos Voskos*:

- (11) αμέτε εσείς απού *’χετε* σφαλίσει | το φοβερό θεριό (Act I, Scene 1, v. 1–2) ‘go, you who locked up the terrible beast’.

In fact, had these examples in *Fortounatos* and *Pistikos Voskos* been οπού/απού + *έχετε*, /u/ and /e/ would have contracted to /o/ through crasis, resulting in οπόχετε/απόχετε, as elsewhere in these two texts: e.g. το κρας απόχει απάνω του *Fortounatos* I.98 (= απού έχει); cf. μόταξε *Pistikos Voskos* II 1.39 (= μου έταξε), but δε μού *’πε* *ibid.* II 1.45 (= δε μου είπε).

Unfortunately not all suspect examples could be checked in the original, though for some it is clear that they cannot possibly be perfects. The following example in another publication by Mertziōs is edited fragmentarily, making the interpretation of οπού μας έχουν τρέξει problematic, but the reading is unlikely to be correct, as the *έχω* + infinitive perfect cannot normally be used with an adverb of definite past time (πέρσι, ‘last year’):⁴⁹

- (12) να εγλύσω από τα πολλά βάσανα των Αγαρηνών οπού πέρσι μας έχουν τρέξει ... (1679, Ioannina)⁵⁰ ‘so that I’ll be delivered of the many sorrows caused by the Turks, who last year *have looted us’/‘which last year *have befallen us’ (?).⁵¹

The following example from Zakynthos is also unlikely to be a perfect, as the perfect is not used in ‘as if’ comparisons, which use the pluperfect, imperfect or aorist indicative. One should probably read *ώσπερ* να είχε γίνει:

47 For the late appearance and relative rarity of the 2nd Pl. imperfect ending *-ατε* see [Janssen], ‘Verb morphology’. For *είχα* + infinitive used as an aorist indicative, expressing temporal anteriority in relation to the present, not the past, see E. Kriaras, ‘Κριτικά και γραμματικά εις το «Κρητικόν Θέατρον»», *BNJ* 25 (1936) 53–5 (repr. in id., *Μεσαιωνικά μελετήματα*, I (Thessaloniki 1988) no. 8).

48 A. Vincent (ed.), *Μάρκου Αντωνίου Φόσκολου Φορουνάτος* (Herakleion 1980).

49 See e.g. Moser, *The History*, 185, 193.

50 K. D. Mertziōs, ‘Το εν Βενετία Ηπειρωτικόν Αρχεῖον. Κεφάλαιον ΚΑ’. Παράρτημα εις την μονογραφίαν «Η οικογένεια των Γλυκίων ή Γλυκίδων»», *Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά* 11 (1936) 295–327, no. 12, l. 3–4.

51 As the text breaks off in mid-sentence, it is not clear whether the sorrows or the Turks are the subject of *έχουν τρέξει*, or whether an altogether different subject is mentioned further on in the sentence.

- (13) την οποίαν στίμα ... θέλουν και την ατζετάρουν, λαουδάρουν, αππροβάρουν και ραπτικάρουν ώσπερ να έχει γίνει δεύτερη και τρίτα (1705, Zakynthos)⁵² ‘this valuation ... they are willing to accept, laud, approve and ratify as if it *has been conducted twice or thrice’ (?).⁵³

In a will from Santorini dated 1554, we read the following:

- (14) όλα εκείνα τα πράγματα που εγόρασεν ..., τα οποία τα έχει αγοράσει από το ινκάντος ο μισέρ Γερώνυμος, ως καθώς φαίνεται οπού του τα ερενοντζιάρισεν και έδωκέν του τα ο μισέρ Γερώνυμος του μισέρ Αντώνη (1554, Santorini).⁵⁴

This example presents two problems: firstly and most importantly, the context surely requires a pluperfect, not a perfect: ‘[Mr Antonis leaves to his wife] all the things he bought ..., which Mr Geronymos had bought at auction, as it is clear [from a document presented] that Mr Geronymos ceded them and handed them over to Mr Antonis’); secondly, the document is a copy of the original made on 5 May 1865, and the language has at times clearly been modernized. Therefore, even if this is not a case of editorial misreading (of the nineteenth-century copy), the original document in all probability will have had ‘είχε αγοράσει’, not έχει αγοράσει. Elsewhere in the same document έχω + perfect passive participle appears as a perfect: χωράφια που έχει αγορασμένα (ibid. l. 14–15).

Another problematic instance can be found in a document from Mani. In this dowry contract a father (Nikolas Matolis) gives various pieces of land to two members of the family of his son’s (Lias’) wife-to-be, Giannis and Panagiotis, the first of whom appears also to be related to the Matolis family. All the things Nikolas gives to the family of the bride are described in the present tense (δίδω, γράφω). Then there is mention of land in Vranovos, which was left in the past to two different family members (Giannis and Lias) by a certain Michalakakis. The passage reads as follows:

- (15) γράφομε και το χωράφι εις το Βράνοβο, οπού το επήρε ο Γιάννης μερασά του από του Μιχαλάκη και για το Βράνοβο το χωράφι π’ επήρε ο Λίας ο Ματολάκης, τη ρεπρή, του Μιχαλάκη του πεθερού του το μερτικό και τόχω αφήσει ο Βριάνοβος να γροικέται μαζικό<ς> τους, του Γιάννη και του Παναγιώτη (1700, Mani)⁵⁵ (‘we also record [in this document] the field in Vranovos, which Giannis received as his share from Michalakakis; and the field in Vranovos that Lias Matolakis received, on the hillside, from Michalakakis, the share of his (Lias’? Michalakakis’?) father-in-law; and I have bequeathed

52 D. Vagiakakos, ‘Μανιάται εις Ζάκυνθον. Επί τη βάσει ανεκδότων εγγράφων του αρχειοφυλακείου Ζακύνθου. Α’ Η οικογένεια Νίκληδων-Νικλιάνων (1554–1559)’, *Επετηρίς του Αρχείου της Ιστορίας του Ελληνικού Δικαίου* 5 (1954) 3–96, no. 52, l. 17–19.

53 The meaning of δεύτερη και τρίτα is not entirely clear to me.

54 I. Ch. Delendas, *Οι καθολικοί της Σαντορίνης. Συμβολή στην ιστορία των Κυκλάδων* (Athens 1949) 76, l. 26–30.

55 S. Skopeteas, ‘Εγγραφα ιδιωτικά εκ Δ. Μάνης των ετών 1547–1830’, *Επετηρίς του Αρχείου της Ιστορίας του Ελληνικού Δικαίου* 3 (1950) no. XX, l. 11–16.

(?) it that Vrianovos should be understood as their joint [property], of Giannis and Panagiotis’).

The subject of the 1st Sg. forms in this document is Nikolas, the father: ‘δίδω εγώ ο Νικόλας ο Ματόλης με τον υγιό μου το γράμμα μας’. Only when mention is made of a piece of land belonging to the son Lias does the verb form become plural (γράφουμε). Τόχω αφήσει is problematic in more ways than one: semantically, as αφήνω is typically used in wills, not in contracts; content-wise, as it would be odd for the father to give a piece of land that does not belong to him; and syntactically: the perfect is inappropriate, as Lias’ share is being given to Giannis and Panagiotis with the present contract. If some degree of speculation is allowed, and bearing in mind that stress notation is lacking throughout the document, I would expect the passage to read something like: και το χωράφι εις το Βριάνοβος να γροικέται μαζικό τους ‘and the field in Vrianovos should be regarded as their joint property’. For the record, let it also be noted that the modern Maniot dialect does not have the έχω + infinitive perfect.⁵⁶

Then there are instances in which έχω + noun (direct object) is erroneously interpreted as έχω + infinitive.⁵⁷ This may lead to rather nonsensical readings:

- (16) να μεράζετε το νερο οπότες εχι στερεψη (1694, Skyros),⁵⁸ normalized in the edition as: να μεράζετε το νερό όποτες έχει στερέψη ‘you should share the water whenever it has run out’, whereas one should of course read: να μεράζεται το νερό οπότες έχει στέρεψη ‘the water should be shared whenever there is a shortage’.

Similarly, for έχει πειράζει in the following example, read έχει πείραξη:

- (17) και αν έχει πειράζει τίπο[τα] ο παπά κυρ Ιγνάτιος ... (1648, Dimitsana)⁵⁹ ‘if papa kyr Ignatios (i.e. the rightful owner) experiences any kind of hindrance’, rather than ‘if [the rightful owner] has hindered anything ...’.

A similar misinterpretation occurs with the following phrase in the *Chronicle of the Turkish Sultans*:

- (18) έμαθε πως επιάσανε τον γαμπρό του τον Ασάνη και τον έχει ο σουλτάνος χάψη (p. 104, l. 3–4)⁶⁰ ‘he learnt that [the Turks] had captured his brother-in-law Asanis, and the sultan has him in prison’.

56 Ralli et al., ‘Ο παρακείμενος’, 356.

57 Cf. την εχω αφηρέσθη εγώ (no. 17, l. 79; 1108, S. Italy) in G. Robinson, *History and Cartulary of the Greek Monastery of St Elias and St Anastasius of Carbone. II I. Cartulary* (Rome 1929), for which the editor rightly proposes to read την έχω αφιέρωσιν (the accentuation in the original is unreliable).

58 X. Antoniadis, *Αρχείο εγγράφων Σκύρου* (Athens 1990) no. 47, l. 17 (facsimile).

59 T. A. Gritsopoulos, ‘Πωλητήρια καί άλλα έγγραφα της παρά την Δημητσάναν μονής του Φιλοσόφου (1626–1787)’, *Επετηρίς του Αρχείου της Ιστορίας του Ελληνικού Δικαίου* 3 (1950) no. 7, l. 10.

60 G. Th. Zoras, *Χρονικόν περί των Τούρκων σουλτάνων (κατά τον Βαρβερινόν ελληνικόν κώδικα 111)* (Athens 1958).

The construction with the word *χάψη*, which the editor rightly prints as a noun (< Turk. *habs* ‘prison’), is sometimes incorrectly interpreted as *έχει χάψει*, the perfect of *χάφτω* ‘to gobble up’ (!). In fact, this seventeenth-century chronicle⁶¹ only uses *έχω* + perfect passive participle.

Another example that is very likely to fall into this category is the following in Aitolos’ *Fables of Aesop*. This would be the only example of the construction in the works of Aitolos,⁶² who very rarely uses the perfect anyhow, though the few examples in his works are of the *έχω* + participle variety.⁶³ More importantly, however, an interpretation as a perfect does not work very well in the context. A hunter is setting up a trap to catch birds:

(19) *όρνεον τον ηρώτησε τι κάμνει εκεί να μάθει | εκείνος προς το όρνεον είπε πως έχει πάθει | κάστρον διά να βουληθεί να κάμει και να κτίσει | εύμορφον, ωραιότατον, να μην είναι στην κτίση (Fable 45, l. 6–8)*⁶⁴ ‘a bird asked [the hunter] what he was doing there, and he said to the bird that he has suffered to build a city more splendid than any other on earth’.

As the hunter is still in the process of supposedly building a city, it is more likely we should read *πάθη* (noun) ‘he said that he was working very hard because he wanted to build a city’.⁶⁵ Consider the Ancient Greek original, which in all versions has a present ‘*πόλιν κτίζω*’ or ‘*πόλιν κτίζειν*’, ‘I am building a city’.⁶⁶ Aitolos’ translation is much less concise than the Aesopic version he translated (the Accursiana version according to Parasoglou),⁶⁷ and while the additions may be Aitolos’ own innovations, it cannot be excluded either that he used more than one source for his translation. He adds the verb ‘to want’, which can be found in certain Italian translations of the fable,⁶⁸ and elaborates upon the beauty of the city the hunter wants to build. He therefore may also have

61 For the *Chronicle* see also G. Th. Zoras, ‘Σύμμεικτα’, *Επιστημονική Επετηρίς Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών* 16 (1965–6) 597–604, in which Zoras edited three additional folia of the manuscript. This puts the date of the *Chronicle* back to the early seventeenth rather than the late sixteenth century (the text now runs up to the year 1603, but there are still folia missing). See also M. Philippides, ‘Chronicle of the Turkish Sultans’, at: <http://www.ottomanhistorians.com>.

62 Other (published) vernacular works of Aitolos are a historical poem edited by N. Bănescu (ed.), *Un poème en grec vulgaire relatif à Pierre le Boiteux de Valachie* (Bucharest 1912) and two encomiastic poems published by S. Lambros (ed.), ‘Δύο ανέκδοτα στιχουργήματα εις Μιχαήλ και Ανδρόνικον τους Καντακουζηνούς’, *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων* 9 (1912) 252–64.

63 Namely *ότ’ από το κεφάλι μου όλα τάχω χαμένα*, *Pierre le Boiteux*, v. 259; and *ο βασιλεύς ... να μ’ έχει ωργισμένη*, *ibid.*, v. 263.

64 G. M. Parasoglou (ed.), *Αισώπου Μύθοι* (Athens 1993).

65 For this meaning of *πάθη* cf. *γάδαρος έναν κηρωρόν εδούλενε με πάθη* in *Fable* 44, l. 1 (‘a donkey worked for a gardener in conditions of hardship’).

66 For the different versions of this fable, see A. Chambry (ed.), *Aesopi Fabulae*, II (Paris 1926) fable 284.

67 Parasoglou, ‘Αισώπου Μύθοι’, 98.

68 See e.g. ‘volere edificare una città’ in G. Landi, *Vita di Esopo Frigio, prudente & faceto favolatore* (Venice 1582) 180.

had access to the metaphrasis in dodecasyllables, which has “καλλίστην πόλιν”, φήσαντος, “κτίζω”, where the Accursiana has τοῦ δὲ πόλιν κτίζειν φαμένον. Finally there is a striking parallel for Aitolos’ πάθη in Panagiotis Soutsos’ free translation of the Fable: [ο κορυδαλός] αὐτὸν ἐρώτα –τί δουλεύεις; –Πόλιν κτίζω κ’ ἔχω μόχθους καὶ φροντίδας.⁶⁹ As Aitolos’ translation was never published and survives in one manuscript in Athos, it is unlikely Soutsos would have had access to it. The parallel πάθη – μόχθους points to a common source for Aitolos and Soutsos, which I have been unable to identify, but which may even have been an Italian translation of Aesop.

There are two more instances where we should most probably read ἔχω + noun (direct object) rather than ἔχω + infinitive. In the following (normalized) edition the form ἔχει πακτώσει may be correct, but given the preceding ἔχω + noun construction (τό ’χει αγορά)⁷⁰ with which it is coordinated it is more likely that we should read ‘μα ἔχει το πάκτωση’ (but he holds it in lease):⁷¹

- (20) ο Ζαννής δεν τό ’χει αγορά από του κυρού της, μα ἔχει το πακτώσει (1657, Mykonos)⁷² ‘Zannis has not bought [the land] from her father, but he has leased it’.

Elsewhere in the document the perfect is expressed by ἔχω + participle: ἔχει καμωμένους (ibid. l. 15).

The other example is a single occurrence in Ioakeim Kyprios’ *Struggle* (written 1648–65; autograph).⁷³ In his lengthy account of the Cretan War, Ioakeim otherwise uses ἔχω + perfect passive participle, albeit sparingly. In a caption to a section on the run-up to the capture of Chania, Ioakeim gives, significantly in direct speech, the answer of the Venetians to the Turks’ request to berth their fleet in the port of Souda.⁷⁴ The caption reads as follows:

- (21) περί πώς ἐφθασαν αἱ γραφές ἀπὸ τὴν Βενετιάν εἰς τὸν πάλιν καὶ ἀποκρίθησαν τοὺς Τούρκους μετὰ μάνητας καὶ ἐνθύμισάν τοὺς, κατὰ τὴν ἀγάπην οὐοῦ ἔχουν, πὼς εἶναι ἀληθινοί, χωρὶς καμίας τραδιτορίας, καὶ ἐκεῖνος οὐοῦ νὰ χαλάσει τὴν βέρα αὐτός ας εἶναι ὁ πταίστης καὶ πὼς «δεν ἔχομεν τάξειν (ms τάξιν) εἰς τὸν τόπον μας νὰ σας δώσομεν λμιώννα, οὐδὲ σας δίδομεν» (v. 1689cap.) ‘on how the letters from Venice reached the ambassador and how they answered the Turks with rage, reminding

69 P. Soutsos, *Μύθοι ἑμμετροὶ ἐν παραθέσει πρὸς τοὺς τοῦ Αἰσώπου ἐξ ὧν ἀνεπλάσθησαν* (Athens 1865) 122.

70 The combination of ἔχω with certain nouns (e.g. αγορά, ορδινία, παραγγελία) can be semantically equivalent to a resultative perfect and is quite common in the LMedG and EMG periods; for details see [Janssen], ‘Verb morphology’.

71 Also note that the modern dialect of Mykonos does not have the ἔχω + infinitive perfect, see Ralli et al., ‘Ο παρακείμενος’, 356.

72 I. T. Visvizi, ‘Δικαστικά ἀποφάσεις τοῦ 17ου αἰῶνος ἐκ τῆς νήσου Μυκόνου’, *Επετηρίς τοῦ Ἀρχείου τῆς ἱστορίας τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Δικαίου* 7 (1957) no. 4, l. 9–10.

73 T. A. Kaplanis (ed.), *Ioakeim Kyprios’ Struggle. A narrative poem on the ‘Cretan War’ of 1645–1669*. Editio Princeps (Nicosia 2012).

74 Unfortunately, immediately after the caption there are four pages missing from the manuscript, making it impossible securely to verify the meaning of the passage.

them that, in accordance with their peace treaty, they are trustworthy without any form of betrayal; and he who may breach the treaty, he should be viewed as the guilty party; and that “we have not promised to grant you harbourage on our territories; nor are we going to grant it to you”.

It cannot be excluded that *έχομεν τάξιν* is actually a perfect, but in my view it is more likely to be another case of *έχω* + noun (direct object), *δεν έχομεν τάξιν* being a literal translation of ‘non habbiamo ordine’. In that case it would mean, in the words of the Venetian ambassador who conveyed the message to the Turks: ‘we have no orders to provide you with harbourage on our territory; nor are we going to grant it to you’.

If the two preceding examples are indeed to be discarded, it leaves us with a handful of genuine examples, three from late seventeenth-century documentary sources – one of which (example 24) could yet prove to be an editorial misreading – and two from the extensive translation of *Don Quixote*, which probably dates from the 1720s. All examples are from texts from the northern mainland/southern Balkans (Transylvania,⁷⁵ Albania, Macedonia, Wallachia) and no passive examples have been found. Its use is generally that of the Standard Modern Greek construction: it presents an action/event anterior to the present with a clear focus on the result of this action/event in the present:⁷⁶

(22) *όποιος χρεωστά ένας περί του άλλου μι ομολογία και δεν έχει πλερώσει κατά την ομολογία του, να είναι θεληματάξης μι την κρίση να τον φυλακώνει* (1691, Sibiu, Transylvania)⁷⁷ (μι = με) ‘if someone owes another by bond and has not paid according to the bond (in other words ‘is in default’), [the other party] has the right to send him to prison through the courts’.

(23) *και άλλα άσπρα έχει δώσει διά κιρί* (1697, Dyrrachion, Albania)⁷⁸ ‘he has also spent money on candle wax’.

(24) *δι’ εκείνα τα ρούχα οπού σου έχω παραγγείλει, να μου τα στείλεις* (1697, Elbasan, Albania)⁷⁹ ‘about the merchandise I have ordered from you, you should send it to me’. This example could not be verified (see n. 42). It could be genuine, but it cannot be excluded that the original has *είχα/έχα παραγγείλει, έχω παραγγελία* or even something completely different.

75 Note that in the community of Sibiu there was a strong presence of merchants from Macedonia and Epirus, see D.-E. Tsourka-Papastathi, *Η νομολογία του Κριτηρίου της ελληνικής «Κομπάνιας» του Σιμπίου Τρανσυλβανίας. 17ος-18ος αι. Πηγές του δικαίου και των θεσμών του απόδημου ελληνισμού* (Athens 2011) 11.

76 See e.g. Moser, *The History*, 183–203 and A. Moser, *Αποψη και χρόνος στην ιστορία της Ελληνικής* (Athens 2009) 123–5.

77 Tsourka-Papastathi, *Η νομολογία*, no. A, 25, fol. 51v, l. 2–4 (facsimile provided).

78 Example from Mertzios, ‘Έμπορική αλληλογραφία’, no. 74, l. 14–15. The reading has been verified by Katerina Korre (see above, n. 42). The document is now filed as *Documenti Greci*, busta 2, no. 118.

79 Mertzios, ‘Έμπορική αλληλογραφία’, no. 33, l. 4.

- (25) εκείνοι οπού δικαίως έχουν αποκτήσει μεγάλην φήμην (*Don Kisotis* p. 164, l. 13–14)⁸⁰ ‘they who have rightfully obtained great fame’ (in other words ‘are very famous’).
- (26) αυτό δεν μπορεί να είναι ..., ότι εσύ με έχεις ειπεί πως την είδες οπού εκοσκίνιζεν σιτάρι, όταν με έφερες την απόκρισιν του γράμματος οπού της έστειλα με λόγου σου (*Don Kisotis* p. 203, l. 20–3) ‘this cannot be true ..., as you have told me that you saw her sieving wheat when you brought me the reply to the letter I sent to her through you’.

In the second example from *Don Kisotis* the construction is used somewhat differently, appearing in a main clause with a temporal clause that makes explicit the moment in time when the action expressed by the construction occurred.⁸¹ A pluperfect or an aorist indicative would have been more suitable in this context. As the text is a translation from Italian, the translator may have been influenced by the text (s)he was translating (‘tu m’ hai già detto’ in Franciosini’s translation).⁸²

In the preceding account it has been my aim to trace and document the emergence of the Modern Greek perfect έχω + infinitive in the Early Modern Greek period; to make editors aware of its virtual non-existence and to alert linguists to the fact that there may be pitfalls in modern editions.

As we have seen, the construction first appears in written sources towards the very end of the seventeenth century in the southern Balkans/northern mainland.⁸³ Interestingly, this is roughly the same area where the construction is attested in the modern dialects.⁸⁴ Given the Balkan connection, one might suspect language contact to have played a role, were it not for the fact that Greek is unique within the Balkan *Sprachbund* in its formation of the perfect with the infinitive.⁸⁵ Therefore the most likely explanation for the construction’s emergence remains that it was modelled on its past-tense counterpart, the pluperfect είχα + infinitive. The question that arises is not why the construction appeared so late – more than three centuries after the pluperfect – but rather why it

80 G. Kechagioglou (ed.), *Μιχαήλ Τσερβάντες, Ο επιτήδειος ευγενής δον Κισότης της Μάντσας. Η πρώτη γνωστή ελληνική μετάφραση* (Athens 2007).

81 The Modern Greek perfect cannot normally be used with a temporal subordinate clause, see e.g. M. Setatos, ‘Ο παρακείμενος στην Κοινή Νεοελληνική’, *Studies in Greek Linguistics* 4 (1983) 111. Unless we take the temporal clause to refer to την είδες, rather than μου έχεις ειπεί. Unfortunately the text is at times lacunary and the actual scene where Sancho Panza returns from his errand and lies to Don Quixote telling him that he saw Dulcinea is missing from the story.

82 *L’ingegnoso Cittadino Don Chisciotte della Mancia. Composto da Michel di Cervantes Saavedra et hora nuovamente tradotto con fedeltà, e chiarezza, di Spagnuolo, in Italiano da Lorenzo Franciosini Fiorentino*, II (Venice 1625) 79.

83 No evidence has been found for a Constantinopolitan origin, as tentatively suggested by Ralli et al., ‘Ο παρακείμενος’, 368.

84 Ralli et al., ‘Ο παρακείμενος’, 356.

85 See B. Joseph, *The Synchrony and Diachrony of the Balkan Infinitive: A Study in Areal, General, and Historical Linguistics* (Cambridge 1983) 62–4 and 245.

appeared at all, given that the Greek language had managed very well without it for centuries. Ralli et al., following Joseph, are probably right when they put forward the working hypothesis that the έχω + infinitive perfect filled a gap in the morphological system of Modern Greek,⁸⁶ though this is likely to have become an issue only after the foundation of the Greek state and the appearance of normative grammars.

In fact, the construction is absent from all Early Modern Greek grammars until the very end of the eighteenth century.⁸⁷ It is interesting to note that in his *Grammar of Spoken Greek* (1806) Dimitrios Darvaris states: ‘the common language (η κοινή γλώσσα) does not have a perfect but instead uses the aorist.⁸⁸ Some, however, have construed (εσύνθεσαν) a perfect in imitation of Italian and French, which is used by the common people (τον όχλον) and by poets, namely: έχω γράψει, έχω διαβάσει’.⁸⁹ The construction is indeed used by certain poets of Darvaris’ time who originate from the North-West, such as Vilaras,⁹⁰ who grew up and lived in Ioannina, and Chatzi-Sechretis, the author of the *Life of Ali Pasha*, who was from Delvinë, Albania,⁹¹ but it appears to be absent from Phanariot poetry such as that of Christopoulos⁹² and Phanariot love songs.⁹³ The first grammar to include the construction in its paradigms is that of Boiatzis (1813),⁹⁴ who, like Darvaris, was from the area where it first appears in writing: Darvaris was from Kleisoura near Kastoria, Boiatzis originated from Moschopolis (modern-day Voskopojë, Albania). It can also be found in the beginners’ grammar of Schinas (1829), who calls it a less-used alternative to the aorist indicative,⁹⁵ and in the school grammar of Ilias Stathopoulos (1851), who gives έχω γράψει as an alternative to έχω γραμμένα.⁹⁶ Panagiotis Soutsos (1853), seeking to reintroduce Ancient Greek, unsurprisingly advises against the use of what he erroneously calls this ‘French perfect’

86 B. Joseph, ‘Textual authenticity: Evidence from Medieval Greek’, in S. Herring et al. (eds), *Textual Parameters in Older Languages* (Amsterdam 2000) 324; Ralli et al., ‘Ο παρακείμενος’, 369–70.

87 Until the end of the eighteenth century grammars have either the έχω + participle construction or no perfect at all, see Manolesou, ‘Μεσαιωνική γραμματική’, 300–2.

88 The same observation can be found in a Russian-Greek grammar: P. Nitzoglou, *Γραμματική Ρωσικο-Γραικική, ήτοι Μέθοδος ευκολωτάτη εις την χρήσιν των ομογενών και φιλολόγων Νέων, των ποθούντων διδασθῆναι ορθώς τε και κανονικώς την των Ρώσων Διάλεκτον. Μεταφρασθείσα υπό Παναγιώτου Νίτζογλου του εκ Βουκουρεστίου* (Moscow 1810) 78. Most of the grammars cited in this section can be consulted online at: <http://anemi.lib.uoc.gr/>.

89 D. Darvaris, *Γραμματική Απλοελληνική* (Vienna 1806) 104.

90 G. Andreiomenos (ed.), *Ιωάννης Βηλαράς, Ποιήματα* (Athens 1995).

91 K. N. Sathas (ed.), *Ιστορικά διατριβαί* (Athens 1870) 123–336.

92 G. Andreiomenos (ed.), *Αθανάσιος Χριστόπουλος, Ποιήματα* (Athens 2001).

93 A. Frantzi (ed.), *Μισμαγιά. Ανθολόγιο φαναριώτικης ποίησης κατά την έκδοση Ζήση Δαούτη* (1818) (Athens 1993).

94 M. Ch. Boiatzis, *Γραμματική ρωμανική, ήτοι μακεδονοβλαχική* (Vienna 1813) 57–8.

95 M. Schinas, *Grammaire élémentaire du grec moderne* (Paris 1829) 55–6.

96 I. S. Stathopoulos, *Γραμματική της Νέας Ελληνικής Γλώσσας, συνερανησθείσα υπό Ηλία Σ. Σταθόπουλου. Προς χρήσιν των μαθητεούντων εις τα σχολεία της Ελλάδος* (Athens 1851) 31.

(i.e. έχω + infinitive).⁹⁷ In the grammar of Vlachos (1864),⁹⁸ it still comes with a caveat: ‘the aorist indicative is almost always used instead of the perfect, which seems rather alien to the Greeks’.⁹⁹ Similarly Jannaris (1897) mentions the construction as ‘being the fabric of scribes’ and stresses it ‘has not yet established itself fully in popular speech’.¹⁰⁰ Elsewhere he calls it a ‘comparatively modern formation, coined by scribes after the pattern of the Romanic languages’.¹⁰¹ Finally, Thumb (1895), too, mentions that έχω + infinitive is very rare in his own time, stating that its use in everyday speech is regionally restricted to the North, though it is popular among writers and poets.¹⁰² It is not entirely clear which writers Thumb had in mind, because a far from exhaustive examination of substantial samples of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century prose texts shows that the construction is almost completely absent.¹⁰³ Most of the texts examined have no perfects at all, or make use of the έχω + participle construction. Of these texts only Vilaras and Makrygiannis have several instances of έχω + infinitive, and Kolokotronis has one.¹⁰⁴ This subject requires further research into eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Greek.

97 P. Soutsos, *Η Νέα Σχολή του γραφομένου λόγου, ή Ανάστασις της Αρχαίας Ελληνικής Γλώσσης εννοουμένης υπό πάντων* (Athens 1853), quoted in A. E. Megas, *Ιστορία του γλωσσικού ζητήματος. Μέρος Β': Αιώνες γλωσσικών συζητήσεων (1750–1926)* (Athens 1927) 272.

98 A. Vlachos, *Elementar-Grammatik der neugriechischen Sprache* (Leipzig 1864) 56–8.

99 Vlachos, *Elementar-Grammatik*, 81–2.

100 Jannaris, *An Historical Greek Grammar*, 559.

101 Jannaris, *An Historical Greek Grammar*, 575. It is surprising that Jannaris, just like Darvaris and Soutsos before him (see above), considers the έχω + infinitive construction to be the result of Romance influence, even though no Romance language forms the perfect in this way. On the other hand, the construction that is, in fact, formed in the same way as the perfect of the romance languages, namely έχω + passive participle, this Jannaris calls the ‘genuine popular form’.

102 A. Thumb, *Handbuch der neugriechischen Volkssprache* (Strassburg 1895) 106–7.

103 The texts sampled include the correspondence of Adamantios Korais (1774–1833); Dimitrios Katartzis’ *Δοκίμια* (1783–91); Georgios Soutsos’ *Αλεξανδροβόδας ο ασυνείδητος* (1785), Rigas Velestinlis’ *Σχολεῖον των ντελικάτων εραστών* (1790); Ioannis Vilaras’ *Ρομεικη γλῶσσα* (1812); Konstantinos Oikonomos’ *Ο Φιλάργυρος* (1816); Solomos’ *Η γυναίκα της Ζάκυθος* (1826–29); Makrygiannis’ *Memoirs* (1829–50); Kolokotronis’ *Memoirs* (1846); Panagiotis Soutsos’ *Ο Λεάνδρος* (1834); Grigorios Palaiologos’ *Ο Πολυπαθής* (1839); Roidis’ *Η Πάπισσα Ιωάννα* (1866); Psycharis’ *Το ταξίδι μου* (1888) and the *Memoirs* of Alexandros Rizos Rangavis (1894).

104 The form may be the result of editorial intervention by Tertsetis: see N. Pandelidis, ‘Το ιδιωματικό στοιχείο στη γλώσσα των Απομνημονευμάτων του Θεόδωρου Κολοκοτρώνη’, in *Proceedings of the 6th International Conference of Greek Linguistics* (Rethymno, 18–21 September 2003) (2004) 7, at: <http://www.philology.uoc.gr/conferences/6thICGL/wscl>.

Days of those made like me: retrospective pleasure, sexual knowledge, and C. P. Cavafy's homobiographics

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This article begins with a comparison between the anonymous Roman d'un inverti (1894/5) and Cavafy's poem 'Νὰ μείνῃ', and then proceeds to read Cavafy's private notes and key erotic poems in the context of late nineteenth- and twentieth-century discourses about non-normative sexuality. During that period, and in a discursive domain dominated by sexological case studies, the deviant sexual life story was published in order to titillate, check, control and medicalize. In Cavafy's texts we see, instead, a network of homosexual life stories proposed as a platform for the conceptualization of novel sexual, aesthetic and social technologies, as well as a new ethics of contact.

In 1894–5 the respected French medico-legal journal *Archives d'anthropologie criminelle, de criminologie et de psychologie normale et pathologique* started publishing an extraordinary narrative in bi-monthly instalments under the title *Le Roman d'un inverti*.¹ It was to become the centre-piece of a larger discussion on 'inversion sexuelle' and 'unisexualité' that would continue for years in the pages of the journal.

Introducing *Le Roman*, its editor, a medical doctor who wrote under the *nom de plume* Dr Lauppts,² notes that this is 'the true history of a man who had a fine name, a very good name in Italy. As precise as a scientific observation, as interesting as a novel, as sincere as a confession, this is perhaps the fullest and most engaging document of its kind'.³

1 *Archives d'anthropologie criminelle, de criminologie et de psychologie normale et pathologique* 9 (1894) 212–15, 367–73, 729–37; 10 (1895) 131–8, 228–41, 320–5. The most influential discussion of this text in English is by Vernon Rosario, 'Inversion's histories/history's inversions: Novelizing fin-de-siècle homosexuality', in V. Rosario (ed.), *Science and Homosexualities* (London and New York 1997) 89–107. Central to my argument has also been Matt T. Reed's excellent article '“La manie d'écrire”: Psychology, auto-observation, and case history', *Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences* 40:3 (2004) 265–84; see also M. Reed, 'Historicizing inversion; or, how to make a homosexual', *History of the Human Sciences* 14:4 (2002) 1–30.

2 Dr Lauppts's real name was George Saint-Paul (Lauppts being the inversion of this name); he also used the *nom de plume* Espé de Metz for his literary writing.

3 I am quoting here from my translation of the original French. The most easily available translation of the *Roman* in English is in W. Peniston and N. Erber (trans. and eds), *Queer Lives: Men's Autobiographies from Nineteenth-Century France* (Lincoln, NE 2009) 173–248.

The *Roman* is in fact a series of letters that had been sent to novelist Emile Zola in the early 1890s by an unnamed Italian who self-identified as an invert ('inverti'), a term that immediately positions him self-consciously within the medico-legal debates of the end of the nineteenth century on deviant gender behaviour. His primary purpose seems to have been to furnish Zola with material so that 'you might be able to use my confession for something'. In fact, what the 'inverti' really wanted for his story was to become part of Zola's fiction: 'this confessional will reveal to you a terrible sickness of the soul, a rare case that has been studied by learned psychologists, but which no novelist has so far dared to portray in a literary work'. Zola, uneasy at the 'confession of this strange, revolting and truly pitiable person', preferred instead to send these letters for publication in the *Archives*. This was then presented as Zola's own response to a special survey on inversion, which had been launched the previous year by the journal and Dr Laughts.

In his 'novel' (a title added by the journal's editors and not by the writer of the original letters), the nameless 'inverti' gives an elaborate description of his family background, early childhood, his first impressions of the male body, his early fantasies as a young boy, his first autoerotic and erotic experiences and his gradual realization that 'his soul did not belong to his sex'. The 'inverti' wants to describe to Zola, he says, 'with a type of retrospective pleasure [*'avec une sorte de volupté retrospective'*] the abominable and passionate episodes I have been involved in'. And towards the closing of 'his confession', he announces himself so satisfied by the autobiographical writing process that he has become unable to sleep and keeps 'returning to my writing which brings long years back to life in a few hours' [*'qui me fait revivre en quelques heures de longues années'*]. In the end, he continues, it feels as if he has 'relived his whole life in its horrible pains, and in its culpable and delirious pleasures [*'dans ses affreuses douleurs et ses joies coupables et délirantes'*]' (241).

All these details seem characteristic of a specific genre of writing that circulated widely in medico-legal circles between 1880 and the 1920s. Similar written accounts were sent in their hundreds to Richard von Krafft-Ebing, who used parts in his successive German and English editions of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, to John Addington Symonds and Havelock Ellis, who used them as the basis of *Sexual Inversion*, to the Lacassagne Institute in France (which published the *Archives*), and would continue to be sent to the Hirschfeld Institute in Berlin until the late 1920s. It ended up being, as Dr Laughts himself called it, a real 'scribomanie', an almost obsessive expression of the 'deviant' self through writing, that matched (if not antagonized) the equally extended detailed description of 'inverted' women or men undertaken by medical doctors.⁴ This 'scribomanie' was undoubtedly encouraged by the specialists who were making their name as researchers in eugenics, forensic psychiatry and sexual pathology. In the pages of the *Archives*, Laughts himself kept inviting people to write in with their experiences and feelings related to sexual inversion; interestingly, his call extended to both 'learned men', who knew about specific cases and had a view on the subject, and to 'inverts' themselves,

4 On the life-story and its use by sexology, see Reed "'La manie d'écrire'".

who were asked to offer their own life-stories. Usually, people who identified as inverts and wrote to the sexologists were of middle- or upper-class origins and of good education; often, they thanked the researchers for their work. As a certain Von R. wrote to Richard von Krafft-Ebing in July 1900, 'Your work alone has opened my eyes. It made the world and myself no longer appear in the grey light of disdain, and, reassuring and rehabilitating, it inspired my confidence'.⁵

The reason *Le Roman d'un inverti* stands out in this vast network of written life stories is that it was not sent to a doctor but to a novelist (even though it ended up in the medical experts' hands anyway), and that it seems to have been, after its publication, one of the best known 'writings of its kind' (being casually referred to by its given title as late as 1930). The decision to send letters to Zola could be seen as both an acknowledgment of the influence of literature on social views (and medical opinions) and an effort to break free from the medical discourse that was by that time dominant in portraying the invert as a human type.

'That vision that crossed twenty-six years': From the novel of inversion to Cavafy's sexual subversion

A central part of the story the 'inverti' wants to tell features the courting of a young soldier, one of his colleagues during conscription. The details of its pivotal scene, Dr Lauphs informs readers of the *Archives*, were so graphic that phrases had to be deleted, and some had to be translated into Latin in the later popular editions of this narrative in book form. The scene starts, after an evening of drinking, when the two soldiers find themselves ready to go to sleep in the communal dormitory:

The eight or ten beds were lost in the vastness of the dark room lit by a tiny lamp which was put out in the middle of the night. We were more or less aroused and our frolicking carried on until late into the night. The quartermaster, who slept in a little room next door, was also dead drunk and snored horribly. My bed was in the darkest corner of the room.

[...]

In our excitement and drunkenness, caused by the wine and the noise we had just made, I showered him as if jokingly with the tenderest caresses and the most flattering words. I was half-lying down [...] He was half-undressed, sitting on my lap close to me.

[...]

He plunged his hand under the blankets and took hold of me. I felt as if I was dying and a huge joy suddenly overcame me. We stayed like that a few moments with our heads resting on one another and our hot cheeks touching, my mouth and his joined on the warm pillow. I've never been as happy since!!!

5 Quoted in H. Oosterhuis, 'Richard von Krafft-Ebbing's "Step-children of nature": Psychiatry and the making of homosexual identity', in Rosario (ed.), *Science and Homosexualities*, 67–88.

The lamp on the ground dimly lit the huge dormitory where our companions slept in beds far from ours, leaving the corner where we lay ecstatic in the deepest shadows.

More than twenty years later, in *July* 1918 in Alexandria, Cavafy published, at his own expense, his poem 'Να μείνει' ('To remain'), which he had completed the previous year. The poem was sent, according to the meticulous lists kept by the poet, to his large number of casual correspondents, and then attached to the growing corpus of his published poems ready to be given to new acquaintances or to people who wrote and asked for them. In 1924, as the poet's fame grew rapidly, the mainstream Alexandrian magazine *Αργώ* would carry this poem on its front page, to be followed in May of the same year by *Παναθήναια* of New York. Then in June the mainstream Athens newspaper *Ελεύθερον Βήμα* republished it, this time followed by articles in the newspapers *Έθνος* and *Ελεύθερος Λόγος* which also carried the poem in full, in the first case to criticize it for obscenity, and in the second to analyse it as typical of 'the poetics of libido' (in an article written by no less a figure than the national poet Palamas). 'Να μείνει' would also be set to music by Dimitri Mitropoulos in 1927 in a specially commissioned French translation. A small note in the journal *Νέα Εστία* of November 1932 informs readers that the influential couple Kostas and Eleni Ouranis (the former a poet, the latter well known as a critic under her *nom de plume* Alkis Thrylos), organized a special soirée for Cavafy, then in Athens for medical treatment, so that the poet could hear Mitropoulos perform his setting of this and another nine poems. The poem reads as follows:

ΝΑ ΜΕΙΝΕΙ

Η ώρα μια την νύχτα θάτανε,
ή μιάμισυ.

Σε μια γωνιά του καπηλειού·
πίσω απ' το ξύλινο το χώρισμα.
Εκτός ημών των δυο το μαγαζί όλως διόλου άδειο.
Μια λάμπα πετρελαίου μόλις το φώτιζε.
Κοιμούντανε, στην πόρτα, ο αγρυπνισμένος υπηρέτης.

Δεν θα μας έβλεπε κανείς. Μα κιόλας
είχαμεν εξαφθεί τόσο πολύ,
που γίναμε ακατάλληλοι για προφυλάξεις.

Τα ενδύματα μισοανοίχθηκαν — πολλά δεν ήσαν
γιατί επύρωνε θείος Ιούλιος μήνας.

Σάρκας απόλαυσις ανάμεσα
στα μισοανοιγμένα ενδύματα·

γρήγορο σάρκας γύμνωμα — που το ίνδαλμά του
 είκοσι έξι χρόνους διάβηκε· και τώρα ήλθε
 να μείνει μες στην ποίησιν αυτή.

Read side by side, the *Roman d'un inverti* and Cavafy's 'Να μείνει' strike the reader in terms of their proximity. A sexual scene performed in a dark room (a drinking place in Cavafy, a barracks where a group of soldiers go to sleep after a long visit to a drinking place in the *Roman*), lit only by a feeble lamp. Clothes are half-opened, the burning skin is touched with passion, the whole event is narrated without guilt, as a very positive memory of pleasure – a certain carelessness about being seen or heard is used in both narratives to underline exactly the level of pleasure that defines the act. Crucially, in both these narratives, the sexual act happens within a double frame: the framing provided by immediate outsiders who are unable to see or hear (acting, that is, as the exact opposite of the implied readers of the two texts), and the larger framing of memory, energized through a writing process that constitutes the self, a writerly *volupté retrospective*. I am purposely repeating the phrase used by the 'inverti'; it describes, I believe, a concept, a strategy, that can also be seen as a key aspect of Cavafian poetics as a whole.

Nevertheless, I am not interested in pursuing detective work to find out whether Cavafy had indeed read the account by the 'inverti' in the *Archives*, or any of its subsequent republications in different forms.⁶ It is highly probable that he had seen this or analogous narratives in similar publications, especially during those early years when, as he memorably put it in a poem, 'the territory of [his] art was being drawn'. What I am more interested in showing is how, why, and to what effect we could read Cavafy's writing in the context of the larger network out of which the *Roman d'un inverti* springs: the discourses around sexology and the (homo)sexual self, sexual transgression and its negotiations with social propriety and legal status that are shaped in the nineteenth century and inform discussions in the early twentieth. In the very next section, I will read a couple of Cavafy's notes as evidence of this type of 'sexual knowledge'. But I will also be asking what happens if we read Cavafy's *poems* alongside this material. Once we contextualize Cavafy in this way, we can return to the initial comparison with the 'inverti' and now see not only the similarities of the two stories, but also their differences.

If in the *Roman d'un inverti* and in 'Να μείνει' we have two very similar erotic scenes, both of them presented as central to the writing and re-performing of a (homo)sexual self, there are significant differences in their handling and afterlife that we also need to take into account. The story of the 'inverti' strives but fails to be used as raw material for literature, ending up being published instead, without its writer's permission, in a medical journal, the text edited, mutilated, broken into episodes,

6 André Raffalovich copied long parts, including the scene in the barracks, in his *Uranisme et unisexualité* (1896), and Dr Lauppts published the *Roman* in his monograph *Tares et Poisons* of the same year. The latter, we do know, was eventually spotted by the 'inverti' himself in the window of an Italian bookseller, and this is how Zola's correspondent came to read his own account turned into the *Roman d'un inverti*. These details are given in Lauppts's later book *Invertis et homosexuels* (1930).

commented on negatively, and shaped as both a medical case study and a titillating narrative. In contrast, Cavafy publishes his own description within an elaborate textual economy completely of his own making, with himself in full command. He controls the poem's circulation in the same way that the text controls the information it contains (there is, for instance, a textual economy that allows the poem not to divulge the gender of the two lovers while also implying it, especially if one reads it in the context of other poems by Cavafy).⁷ This is also a careful aesthetic control, announced from the outset in the text, when memory's hiccup ('η ώρα μου [...] ή μιόμισυ') is paired with an unconventional enjambement within the verse. Cavafy's text enters a very precisely defined economy of publication and wants to show that it controls a similarly precise aesthetic economy – the poem, after all, ends by asserting that *this is* 'ποίησις'. A number of its tropes, memory's intertwining with eroticism, the distillation of the erotic act in verse, the indeterminate yet obvious gender of the two actors, even the organic role of the lamp and of the time late in the evening, are all elements with marked significance in what had by then become Cavafy's poetic universe. The reader is thus called on to recognize this poem as another example of a self-styled narrative of mastering the exposure of the (homo)sexual self within an aesthetic domain.

If the 'invert' vanishes under the pressure of a context that codifies, instrumentalizes and pathologizes him and his 'confession', Cavafy seems more eager to assert mastery over his sexual and textual challenge.

Cavafy's sexual knowledges

The series of publications in the *Archives* on inversion belongs to a specific discursive genealogy which can be summarily referred to as nineteenth century sexology – it is a much larger discussion that includes medical doctors, but also legal and medico-legal experts, and touches on psychology and eugenics, as well as law reform. In his first volume of the *History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault famously argued that this circuit of legal and medical discourses in the nineteenth century helped organize bodies and acts into a system of deeper characteristics – in the case of the homosexual, what before were forbidden acts of sodomy now became a means to subjectivation: 'the sodomite had been a temporary aberration, the homosexual was now a species'.⁸

7 It is interesting to note that the poem's first 'semi-private' publication by Cavafy took place in the month of July – potentially heightening the effect of a recollection of an event that had taken place in *July* many years previously – and that almost a decade passed before this poem was republished in newspapers and its musical setting performed in public.

8 M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (London 1978) 36. Even though its temporal boundaries may have been redrawn (to include at least the eighteenth century), Foucault's larger gesture in 'historicizing the subject of desire' remains the most productive paradigm in the relevant discussion. See, for instance, the ground covered from David Halperin's *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* (New York 1990) to his more recent *How to Do the History of Homosexuality* (Chicago 2004); cf. J. Weeks, 'Remembering Foucault', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14:1-2 (2005)

As critics have shown in detail, the medico-legal treatises on sexuality that appear so often in Italian, German, French and English since the 1860s, mediate key anxieties of the period (modernization, urbanization, population decline, racial containment, miscegenation, class restructuring). They condemn or warrant gender inversion and same-sex sexual practices to different degrees. Yet in the process, they also (de)scribe a sexual specificity, almost an identity that one could call in today's vocabulary 'homosexual'. Crucially, they become platforms from which those who self-identify as sexually different or abnormal decide to speak out (again, in different ways, ranging from self-recrimination to proud assertion).⁹

We will, perhaps, never find out whether Cavafy had actively sought precise information from particular sexological writings circulating during his time across Europe, and certainly reaching cosmopolitan Alexandria. However, his way of referring to male-male relationships in his poetry alerts the reader to a knowledge of this context. Cavafy is certainly informed by the *scientia sexualis* of his time;¹⁰ he is most probably drawing his knowledge, as I have shown elsewhere, from a mixture of academic and popularizing books, material circulating in a subcultural manner, as well as from references made in the paratext of popular literary publications which touch on non-normative sexuality and start appearing after the turn of the century.¹¹ What is crucial is not where he finds this information, but how he seems willing to address it: from a certain moment on, Cavafy decisively treats this sexual knowledge as the liberating sign of new times.

A clear indication of this development comes from a series of private memos written between 1895 and 1910, meticulously collated in the poet's private papers.¹² After a handful of early notes documenting an anxious struggle 'against temptation' and an effort to maintain personal hygiene, perhaps evidence of widely shared Victorian fears

Continued

186-201. Of course, there is vast number of publications treating this issue; a useful overview is given by Chris Waters, 'Sexology', in H. G. Cocks and M. Houlbrook (eds), *Palgrave Advances in the Modern History of Sexuality* (London 2005) 41-63.

9 More recent discussion has astutely elaborated on the difference between the diagnosis of 'sexual inversion' and that of 'homosexuality' – a distinction Foucault does not make. See Halperin, *One Hundred Years*, 15-16 and G. Chauncey, 'From sexual inversion to homosexuality: Medicine and the changing conceptualization of female deviance', *Salmagundi* 58 (1982-83) 116.

10 Even though from different perspectives, a number of essays in P. Roilos (ed.), *Imagination and Logos: Essays on C. P. Cavafy* (Cambridge, MA 2010), support a similar argument. Important earlier work that attempted to use gender theory in order to reread Cavafy includes M. Alexiou, 'Eroticism and poetry', *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 10:1-2 (1983) 45-65; G. Syrimis, 'Promiscuous texts and abandoned readings in the poetry of C. P. Cavafy', in G. Nagy and A. Stavrakopoulou (eds), *Modern Greek Literature* (New York 2003) 96-114; C. Robinson, 'Cavafy, sexual sensibility and poetic practice: Reading Cavafy through Marc Doty and Cathal O Searcaigh', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 23:2 (2005) 261-79.

11 D. Papanikolaou, "'Η νέα φάσις του έρωτος": Ο νεοτερικός λόγος της σεξολογίας και ο Καβάφης', *Επιστημονική Επετηρίδα της Φιλολοσοφικής Σχολής Θεσσαλονίκης* 12 (2010) 195-211.

12 All the notes I am reading here come from C.P. Cavafy, *Ανέκδοτα σημειώματα ποιητικής και ηθικής* (Athens 1983). It is possible that other similar notes exist in the Cavafy archive, yet as long as they remain 'in preparation for publication', they cannot be seen by researchers.

about masturbation, a small piece of paper dated 1902 reads: 'I don't know whether perversion is a source of strength; I believe it in some cases. But I am sure it is the source of greatness'.¹³ Later, though, in a couple of longer notes from 1905, the reference to sexual states becomes more explicit, outspoken and concrete. Significantly, these later notes are as much about sexuality as they are about writing literature, being an intellectual, an artist and a responsible citizen.

The first such note, written in October 1905, complains about the innate conservatism of English literature, its unwillingness to 'depart from the norms, its fear of confronting pseudo-morality' in sexual matters. Conversely, Cavafy says,

In the past ten years, how many French books – both good and bad – have been written which examine and take bravely into account the new phase of eros [την νέα φάσι του έρωτος]. It is not new; it has been only neglected for centuries, under the preconception that it was madness (science says no, it is not) or a crime (logic says no, it is not).

Two months later, in a very similar fashion, and speaking again very candidly about homosexuality without (even in a private memo) naming it, the poet returns to the issue of 'how to express oneself more freely'. It would have been easier for him to do so in French, he says, because, in that language, as opposed to English, one can use pronouns that 'tell and hide'. Yet the rest of the note leaves linguistic barriers behind – and becomes a more general comment about aesthetics, the expression of one's sexual self, and the reading of another's similar experience.

Wretched social laws – a result of neither health measures nor of any logical judgment – have diminished my work. They have hampered my means of expression; they have prevented me from bringing enlightenment and emotion to those who are made like me [εις όσους είναι σαν κ' εμένα κατωμένοι]. [...] But, what can I do? I am unfairly wasted in the aesthetic domain. And I will remain an object of conjecture; and they will understand me better from all those things I denied. [15/12/05]¹⁴

In a convergence of literary and sexual poetics, these two notes indicate not only Cavafy's position regarding the *scientia sexualis* of his time,¹⁵ but also the way he seems eager to address it. The central phrases from my perspective are 'science says it

13 One feels inclined to suggest that the word 'διαστροφή' could be translated here not as 'perversion', but as 'inversion'. J. A. Symonds, Raffalovich and Edward Carpenter, but also a number of self-identified inverts who offered themselves as case studies to sexological treatises, made a point similar to the one Cavafy makes here, and they did so quite repetitively (see Raffalovich, *Unisexualité*, passim).

14 Both notes are quoted in Manuel Savvidis' translation available on <http://www.cavafy.org>, with slight changes.

15 I have decided not to overcrowd this article with a detailed exposition of textual affinities to particular sexological texts. For the record, though, the first note presents an argument about innate inversion that reads almost exactly like the opening of the first edition of Havelock Ellis's *Sexual Inversion*; the second note uncannily resembles comments made by a number of people studied in that book. See the excellent new critical edition of *Sexual Inversion* by Ivan Crozier (London 2008).

is not' and 'logic says it is not', which return in the second note as 'neither a result of any health measures, nor of any logical judgment'. Cavafy seems aware of a broad discussion that has both a medical/'scientific' and a legal side. The 'new phase of eros' is a projection of a modern state of affairs according to which, from both a medical and a legal perspective, homosexuality is redeemed as 'something that exists in a few people'. What Cavafy does here is to make an epistemic claim: this novel *episteme*,¹⁶ this 'new phase of eros', is exactly what allows him to relate a medico-physiological observation (it is not madness, it is not against 'public health' [*υγιεινή*], it is innate) to a socio-legal argument (it is not a crime, the laws of society against it are not a result of safeguarding public health or justice) and the need to express the self, to find a literary poetics that would allow one to show one's position within this new epistemic shift.

Let us not overlook the fact that these notes come from a man who at that time already wants to play a major role in the literature and culture of a city, a nation and perhaps a world canon, in a place like Alexandria and within an ethnic identity that he conceives as Hellenic. But they also show a homosexual man who decides to use strategically the discourses that have codified homosexuality, turning them into a point from which to speak, a constitutive mark of the self, an assertion and further reshaping of subjectivity and, even, minoritarian community.

Cavafy in 1905 seems to be looking desperately for ways to 'illuminate and move those who are made like me'. That same phrase, 'καμωμένος σαν και μένα', would return in another unpublished text, this time a poem, also archived by the poet in his private papers. The poem 'Κρυμμένα' ('Hidden Things'), probably completed in 1908, repeats the rhetoric we have already seen in the personal notes. It starts from a statement similar to that of his December 1905 note and on the surface instructs those who wish 'to find out who I was' not to search into what was said and done, but to look instead into the more covert and hidden words and deeds; it then adds, in the most celebrated lines of the poem, that 'perhaps it is not worth devoting / so much concern and effort to learn about me', since 'at a later stage, in a more perfect society / someone else made like me / will appear certainly and act freely' [*βέβαια θα φανεί κι ελεύθερα θα κάμει*].

Obviously, 'Κρυμμένα' (as was the case with the personal notes that paved the way for it), is *not* meant to discourage readers from trying to 'find out' and 'learn' about the subject hiding behind those 'hidden things'. It is about the opposite: the impulse to seek out, to uncover, to learn about the homosexual life history behind the covert lines – of thoughts, of deeds, and of poetry. In a circuitous way, it also provides a life story already sketched in front of the reader; the poetic voice, in a confessional mode, tells us that he has led a covert life ('*τες πράξεις και τον τρόπο της ζωής μου*'), full of semi-hidden acts and writings ('*απαρρήρητες πράξεις... γραψίματα σκεπασμένα*'); and then offers an alternative: there will be *another one made like me*, who will act more freely;

16 I am using this term here in the way Foucault uses it, for instance in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London 1972) 192.

those who wish will be able to read *that other One's life story*, if they also want to find out about me.

What links together those personal notes, the poem 'Hidden' and other poems written around this time of crucial development,¹⁷ is first the complaint about the inability to express one's desires in plain, realistic terms, and the striving to find a way to depict homosexual desire directly in literature. But on a second level, what links these texts together is a confidence that this type of desire is a characteristic of certain people, almost of *a type of person*, and that the experiences of people of this type are common, similar, and, to an important extent, interchangeable. My argument finds its roots in these texts from the first decade of the twentieth century, meticulously stuck together and left behind by the poet, unpublished yet archived 'to remain'. It is with them in mind that I suggest we could read Cavafy's subsequent public oeuvre as an elaborate strategy to offer oneself (and one's self) as a case history of homosexual subjectivity in this 'new phase of eros'. In the same vein, I propose to read Cavafy's erotic poems as fragments of life stories, homosexual case histories offered to (if not imposed on) the public domain and redeemed through literary aesthetics and a slowly but steadily emerging sexual ethics.

From the 1910s onwards, Cavafy would start writing and, in circumspect ways, publishing poems that treated homosexuality in realistic and more outspoken terms. What he achieves in those decades are a realism and a self-conscious pride in reference to homosexuality, often thematized in the poems themselves, whether set in historical or in contemporary contexts.

Of course, Cavafy was neither the only nor the first modern writer to introduce homoeroticism prominently into his literary writing. Models of companionship (Whitman), eros and friendship based on a rereading of classical literature and an idealism about male beauty (Pater, Symonds), as well as the closely related literary and cultural movements of Aestheticism and Decadence (Wilde, Huysmans, Rachilde), were all available to subcultures and individuals as ways to conceptualize and publicly support non-heterosexual attachments since the late nineteenth century. A distinct subculture of late Victorian Oxford, for instance, used classical idealism and aestheticism in order to formulate what Linda Dowling has called 'a new system of values and attitudes, associated with a variety of movements in art and society, having in common their relation to the inchoate counter-discourse of "homosexuality"'.¹⁸

Medico-legal discussions at the end of the nineteenth century had also influenced these more esoteric literary depictions of homoeroticism. The Oxford group of intellectuals who called themselves Uranians took their name from the term *Urning*, popularized by the German legal official Karl Heinrich Ulrichs in pamphlets published in the 1860s and 1870s, a pivotal moment in the larger medico-legal interest in homosexuality. And in 1895, Wilde's consecutive trials became a *cause célèbre* leading to a decadent literary

17 I am thinking here of the three poems written by Cavafy in 1903–4: 'Ο Σεπτέμβρης του 1903', 'Ο Δεκέμβρης του 1903', 'Ο Γεννάριος του 1904'.

18 L. Dowling, *Hellenism and Homosexuality in Victorian Oxford* (Ithaca 1996) 133.

lifestyle, the appreciation of 'Hellenic' male beauty and the medico-legal views on homosexuality being inextricably linked, if not confused, in the mind of the general public. Yet it is important that it was exactly this association that Wilde sought to repudiate in his letter from gaol that became *De Profundis*.

By that time, J. A. Symonds, an Oxford classicist and a Uranian poet himself, had already written and circulated to select audiences *A Problem in Modern Ethics* and *A Problem in Greek Ethics*, in which he analysed homosexuality in classical Greece and Modern Europe respectively. In the early 1890s, Symonds sought the collaboration 'of a medical man' in Havelock Ellis, in order to organize and eventually publish what eventually became *Sexual Inversion*. Nothing any of the Uranians wrote comes close to the realism, analytical vigour and clarity about homosexual desire and its influence on subjectivity found in the case studies offered by Ellis for this publication, those texts, which were written alternately in the first and third person and offered by men and women who wanted to recount parts of their sexual life story.¹⁹ In the same way, Cavafy's poetry, in its realism and strategic reference to sexuality, as well as its expressive lack of remorse or shame about it, looks much more akin to these descriptions than to the Uranians' aestheticist poetics.

Symonds's story shows that by the late 1890s the sexological discourse had attained a validity, a claim to realism and a power that literature, it was felt, no longer possessed on the issue. This is why people like him looked to publish within a medical framework. On the other hand, literature still seemed to offer a way to move away from the medicalized identity narrative and reproduce it in positive terms. This is why the Italian 'inverti' sought Zola and offered him his own life story, in an effort to see it written into the literature of realism. Such a gesture would remain incomplete in the 1890s. Cavafy's period of maturation, the 1900s and the 1910s, on the other hand, mark the period when this gesture *could* be completed; it is exactly this achievement that one witnesses in Cavafy's own poetry.

Cavafy's life histories

From at least the 1910s onwards, Cavafy combines his much more realistic take on the 'new phase of eros' (including the reference to sexual acts and their subcultural settings) with the much more 'acceptable' references to literary Decadence and Aestheticism. Yet it is clear, especially in later poems, that these literary references are thematized, recalled as fragments of a concrete system to which the poems allude in a strategic way, often only too aware that they are actually talking about something else. In many a Cavafy erotic poem, the classicizing appreciation of male beauty and the decadent narrative are *tactically* woven together with the realistic reference to the homosexual act, desire and (homo)sexual development.

19 Cf. J. Bristow, 'Symonds's history, Ellis's heredity: Sexual inversion', in L. Bland and L. Doan (eds), *Sexology in Culture: Labelling Bodies and Desires* (Cambridge 1998) 79–99.

Take, for instance, the poem 'Πέρασμα' ('Passage') (1917):

Εκείνα που δειλά φαντάσθη μαθητής, είν' ανοιχτά,
φανερωμένα εμπρός του. Και γυρνά, και ξεφυλά,
και παρασύρεται. Κι ως είναι (για την τέχνη μας) σωστό,
το αίμα του, καινούριο και ζεστό,
η ηδονή το χαίρεται. Το σώμα του νικά
έκνομη ερωτική μέθη· και τα νεανικά
μέλη ενδίδουνε σ' αυτήν.

Κ' έτσι ένα παιδί απλό
γίνεται άξιο να το δούμε, κι απ' τον Υψηλό
της Ποίσεως Κόσμο μια στιγμή περνά κι αυτό —
το αισθητικό παιδί με το αίμα του καινούριο και ζεστό.

The poem achieves an interesting balance between a depersonalized and aestheticized 'ηδονή' lying outside but ready, like a vampire, to claim a body, and the person that owns this body and is willingly surrendering himself to 'ηδονή', acting on his own earlier fantasies. This is a balance between a life story and the moment of bliss, mirrored in the balance between observing and writing, aesthetics and poetics ('να το δούμε – ποιήσεως κόσμος'). In turn, this is reflected in the balance between another aesthetics and poetics, this time of the evolutionary self fantasizing, watching and being watched and the self acting ('φαντάσθη', 'είν' ανοιχτά εμπρός του', 'γυρνά και ξεφυλά και παρασύρεται'). One does not need to have gone into the detail of the repressive discourses of a previous period in order to realize the novelty of the phrase 'εκείνα που δειλά φαντάσθη μαθητής' ['those things he timidly imagined as a schoolboy'].²⁰ Buried under the pretext of a literary/philosophical pederastic eros (between older poet(s) watching and youth emerging into life) and the façade of decadence that creates high beauty and poetry out of dissolution, we find the idea of a positive life story. What the poem follows is an innate drive leading to a sexual education and a modern vocabulary about desire, sexual development and the economy of bodies and pleasures. At the same time, the layer of Socratic eros and the homoerotic coding of Decadence and Aestheticism are also used in order to further 'homosexualize' the realistic, life-story element of the poem: the homoerotic coding clarifies what kind of transgressive desire ('έκνομη ερωτική μέθη') the youth surrendered to.

A full account of the relation of Cavafy's homosexual realism to the larger sexological discourses circulating at the poet's time would of course have to consider, as I have already implied, not only the material present in medico-legal writing, but also an array of other related sources, including media discussions, popularizing hygiene manuals and post-decadent erotic writing. All of them, however, use certain narrative tropes for the presentation of the homosexual life which had been exemplified in the medico-legal discussion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is these common tropes,

20 See also the poems 'Επίγρ', 'Εν τη οδώ', and even 'Ομνύει'.

these key aspects of the representation of the (homo)sexual life story, that Cavafy reworks in radical ways. The first such aspect is confession: the incitement of the (homo)sexual subject to describe, in a confessional manner, their own psychosexual upbringing. The second is the representation of the sexual act and the impact its experience (and the memory of this experience) has on the individual. And the third is the framing of other people's lives, and the reasoning for their telling and showing. These three narrative tropes, roughly corresponding to the *who*, the *what* and the *how* (who 'speaks', what is being described, in what context and to/for whose eyes) of the classic sexological case study, are being revisited by Cavafy and turned on their head. In his erotic poems, life stories cease to be tools of narrative surveillance and medicalization, and become instead modalities for an ongoing meditation on the homosexual as a speaking, desiring and ethically implicated subject.

That Cavafy was engaged in a lifelong project of confession, providing the poetic equivalent of a sexual journal in his poetry, has been a very simplistic, yet also very popular way to read Cavafy's text since the time of its first circulation. As Timos Malanos, one of the poet's earliest critics, repeatedly affirmed, Cavafy's oeuvre could be viewed as 'autobiographical or indirectly autobiographical'. In a similar way, a whole generation of Cavafy critics in Greece, in an effort to explain 'Cavafy's problem', took not only to reading his poems as autobiographical statements, but also to reading them as statements of a homosexual confession that has to be medically (and after a certain moment, psychoanalytically) examined. Yannis Papatheodorou, who has provided us with the most impressive collection and discussion of these views, comments that for this generation of critics 'poetry has become the paradigmatic structure of a pathological world, and the poet has been fully transformed into a Homo Psychologicus'.²¹ For some critics, it was Cavafy's own homosexual passion that made him want to engage in this exercise of 'tell-all' to such extent – with the result that Cavafy's poems were being read as an elaborate exhibitionism of the sexual self.²²

However, if one takes a closer look at Cavafy's own poetry, one finds a consistent strategy of undermining the expectation for autobiographical material, confirming but also subverting it at the same time. Nowhere is this strategy more evident and self-

21 Y. Papatheodorou, 'Η γνώση των ηδονών: Ο ιστορισμός του Καβάφη και η κριτική (1932–1946)', *Ποίηση* 24 (2004) 252. Cf. Ch. L. Karaoglou, *Εκτός ορίων* (Thessaloniki 2000) and P. Roilos, C. P. Cavafy: *The Economics of Metonymy* (Champaign, IL 2010).

22 'Little by little, he is lured by the idea to confess', T. Malanos, *Ο ποιητής Κ. Π. Καβάφης* (Athens 1933) 97. Cf. A. Komis, *Κ. Π. Καβάφης* (Corfu 1935): 'His passion has blinded him. It will push him to confess incidents, to reconstruct explicit scenes from his private life [...] in the rawest way. We will accuse him of immorality, but he is just honest.' (22) It should be noted here that the idea that sexual abnormality creates an urge to talk, narrate and confess, was widely held in the late nineteenth century. As Rees observes, according to many doctors of the time, 'the very urge to confess their desires and to recount their stories was itself a symptom of degenerate perversion' ('La manie' 275). Lauppts, in a comment that predates Komis' statement on Cavafy by half a century, said about the 'invert' that 'at certain moments, when the memory of his guilty pleasures reappears to his imagination, passion takes the upper hand and dictates' (quoted *ibid.*).

referentially coded than in the five poems using Cavafy's famous 'Days' title, published between 1917 and 1932. These poems, which have inspired, among others, the titles of the personal published diaries of the modernist poet Seferis, make the reader expect fragments of personal experience. Yet at the same time, not only do they not all match Cavafy's own life story, but they also, quite self-consciously, *do not add up*: they cannot have been only about Cavafy's own life, nor about any single person's life story. In their alteration between first- and third- person narrative and focalization, stories about erotic meetings, lives gone astray, or simply memories of loves lost, these poems become a manifesto not of modernist autobiographics (as some critics have attempted to read them, encouraged by their titles),²³ but of a *homobiographics*.²⁴ They seem to be suggesting that 'Cavafy's aim is not only to 'enlighten and move those who are made like [him]', but to represent *their* lives too. What may start as one's life story, becomes many lives' stories, all of them homotropically framed.²⁵

Let us consider how this is achieved in the poem 'Μέρες του 1896' ('Days of 1896'), published in 1927:

Εξευτελίσθη πλήρως. Μια ερωτική ροπή του
 λίαν απαγορευμένη και περιφρονημένη
 (έμφυτη μολοντούτο) υπήρξεν η αιτία:
 ήταν η κοινωνία σεμνότυφη πολύ.
 Έχασε βαθμηδόν το λιγιστό του χρήμα·
 κατόπι τη σειρά, και την υπόληψί του.

23 In the standard 1963 Greek edition the notes to the four 'Days' poems written in the third person include a brief mention of Cavafy's age at these different dates. Interestingly, the only one that does not have such a note is 'Μέρες του 1903', which is also the only poem of this series written in the first person as a direct diary entry about lost love. What is implied by Savvidis is taken to an extreme by Sarah Ekdawi, who, in a recent article, has tried to show the importance of those dates (and of all the alternative dates Cavafy toyed with while drafting the poems) for Cavafy's own life. See S. Ekdawi, 'Missing dates: The Μέρες poems of C.P. Cavafy', *BMGS* 35:1 (2011) 70–91.

24 Leigh Gillmore, in her *Autobiographics: A Feminist Theory of Women's Self-Representation* (Ithaca 1994), has proposed the term *autobiographics* to suggest genealogies of autobiographical writing beyond the genre of autobiography, and on the basis of it 'to further a feminist thought of autobiographical production' (13). For her, *autobiographics* describes 'those elements that mark a location in a text where self-invention, self-discovery, and self-representation emerge within [while also resisting and contradicting] the technologies of autobiography' (42). With *homobiographics* I similarly point to the strategies of re-inventing and re-presenting homosexual life-stories while also self-consciously referring to the possibility, difficulty and social negation of such representation.

25 My argument talks about Cavafy's strategy in his erotic poetry as a whole, and this means that I believe that almost all his erotic poems, including the ones in historical settings, converge in the socially subcultural and erotic experience they convey, in the way they present it as crucial for the shaping of certain people's self, and in the strategy they use to redeem this experience. For the sake of conciseness, though, and in order to avoid a lengthy discussion of whether Cavafy's historical erotic poems need to be read as allegories of contemporary sexual experience, I have for the time being limited myself to talking only about erotic poems set in a contemporary setting.

Πλησίαζε τα τριάντα χωρίς ποτέ έναν χρόνο
να βγάλει σε δουλειά, τουλάχιστον γνωστή.
Ενίοτε τα έξοδά του τα κέρδιζεν από
μεσολαβήσεις που θεωρούνται ντροπιασμένες.
Κατήντησ' ένας τύπος που αν σ' έβλεπαν μαζύ του
συχνά, ήταν πιθανόν μεγάλως να εκτεθείς.

Αλλ' όχι μόνον τούτα. Δεν θάτανε σωστό.
Αξίζει παραπάνω της εμορφιάς του η μνήμη.
Μια άποψις άλλη υπάρχει που αν ιδωθεί από αυτήν
φαντάζει, συμπαθής· φαντάζει, απλό και γνήσιο
του έρωτος παιδί, που άνω απ' την τιμή,
και την υπόληψί του έθεσε ανεξετάστως
της καθαρής σαρκός του την καθαρή ηδονή.

Απ' την υπόληψί του; Μα η κοινωνία που ήταν
σεμνότυφη πολύ συσχέτιζε κοντά.

Written in Cavafy's signature split line – a device that asks the reader from the outset to be alert to the process of connecting words and phrases –, 'Μέρες του 1896' ends not really with 'prudish society making associations in a stupid way', but with the poem itself performing the same gesture in a much subtler way. What the poem does is to re-sort and re-link diverse but parallel discourses around sexuality in order to create what could be claimed as a new positionality.

Like a coin, one side of the poem sounds almost like an activist polemic against the social and legal condemnation of an innate human condition. The other side restages an aesthetic view of beauty, eros and 'ηδονή' that cleanses not only the deed and the doer (the poem ends by talking about the need of 'pure flesh' for 'pure pleasure'), but also, quite clearly, makes the poem publishable and culturally powerful as an aesthetic document. Nevertheless, the crux of it is not so much the verb 'συσχέτιζε' ('combined', 'made links', 'associations'), but the noun that is reviewed (and remains hanging in a question) in the penultimate line: 'υπόληψι', a word denoting reputation, social standing, and the subjectivity one assumes in the eyes of one's community. Aesthetic, erotic, literary, the struggle here is also about a new mode of social belonging. In its final lines the poem proposes a different way of 'sorting and conjoining' the different aspects of sexuality and propriety; by so doing, it also manages to suggest that there is a different 'υπόληψις', one that transcends social prudishness. In this new discursive domain put forward (this 'άποψις άλλη', the 'other viewpoint' of which the poem itself stands as a metonymy), the subject in question is set to regain both his social standing and sense of self, a novel 'υπόληψι'.

Not only is this a new mode of subjectivity, though: the new 'sorting and conjoining' revisits old tropes of the aesthetic and the erotic in order to produce a novel, radical eroticism, as in the case of the poem 'Μέρες του 1901' ('Days of 1901') (1927):

Τούτο εις αυτόν υπήρχε το ξεχωριστό,
 που μέσα σ' όλην του την έκλυσι
 και την πολλήν του πείραν έρωτος,
 παρ' όλην την συνειθισμένη του
 στάσεως και ηλικίας εναρμόνισιν,
 ετύχαιναν στιγμές — πλην βέβαια
 σπανιότατες — που την εντύπωσιν
 έδιδε σάρκας σχεδόν άθικτης.

Των είκοσι εννιά του χρόνων η εμορφιά,
 η τόσο από την ηδονή δοκιμασμένη,
 ήταν στιγμές που θύμιζε παράδοξα
 έφηβο που — κάπως αδέξια — στην αγάπη
 πρώτη φορά το αγνό του σώμα παραδίδει.

The poem boldly suggests that there is harmony in having (quite a lot of) sex in accordance with one's age. The aestheticist and the decadent resonances are here subsumed under a very simple story of sexual education and life-story development, which results in the production of eroticism both within the life story narrated and as an aspect of its telling. What readers have in front of their eyes is eroticism as a system: virginity, for instance, reconstructed through the acts and experiences that follow it; that *touch for the very first time* presented as a moment of aesthetic becoming and pleasure, recaptured through well-trained bodies at special times. The romantic cult of virginity seems now to be far in the past. Rather than the purity of the untouched virgin body, what is introduced here is a modern technology of the self able to produce radical desire.²⁶

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More and more, reading Cavafy's erotic poems as a group and taking his later poems as a key, we can discern the following pattern: erotic reveries, sexual acts and/or fragments of homosexual life stories are redrafted into a larger mechanism that values them as aesthetic, erotic and social technologies. They may on the surface be about life stories, sexual histories, sexual lives, and the power of the aesthetic to reclaim all those. But I argue that further to aesthetic purity, classicized beauty and the radical potentiality of poetry, what is put forward in these poems is sexual technology, new strategies of subjectivity and new ways of caring for the self and the other.

These are not life stories meant to titillate, check, control, or medicalize; here we have lives that are meant to be asserted as novel technologies and aesthetics of the self

26 I use the term technology here in the way Michel Foucault employs it in his later work. See, for instance, L. Martin, H. Gutman and P. Hutton (eds), *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (London 1998).

(‘μία άποψις άλλη υπάρχει, που αν ιδωθεί απ’ αυτήν...’), whose exposure is guaranteed through a voice and a gaze that also expose their own strategies of identification and desire. There is someone looking (and lurking) at the youth passing in ‘Πέρασμα’; someone is proposing another ‘viewpoint’ in ‘Μέρες του 1898’, somebody has seen, felt (and almost wants to re-view) the ‘almost untouched’ flesh of the youth in ‘Μέρες του 1901’. And in another poem of the same series, ‘Μέρες του 1908’ (‘Days of 1908’), crucially the very last poem Cavafy published in his own lifetime (1933), the description of a youth’s travails at a particular moment in his own life (‘that year found him without a job...’), is all based, as the reader eventually realizes, on details glimpsed by the speaker in erotic gazings during that same year. These gazings of and onto the past are now being redoubled in the gazing gesture that the poem itself represents: ‘Ah, Days of 1908, your vision kept him / as he was when he took his unworthy clothes off.’ Whose Days of 1908 is the poem talking about, the poor young man’s or the onlooker’s? Whose Days of 1896, 1901, 1908 etc. are those poems recalling? Those of the young ‘debauched’ men, or of the speaker who at the same time decides to redeem their lives, ‘his’ own gaze thrown at them and his decision to tell these stories? The point these and so many others of Cavafy’s erotic poems make, is that you cannot tell these types of experience apart; neither can you, for that matter, fully dissociate yourself as a reader from them. Because those ‘days’ in lives that are open to be seen, examined, and re-viewed, are also proposed as experiences in whose core lies desire and bliss, *volupté* and *jouissance*; only that these states seem radically expandable, as they are shared by the protagonists of these stories, the onlookers within them, the poetic voice in its past self, the poetic voice in the now of the narration, and potentially the reader in the multiple temporalities of the reading process. These poems are not about exposure, but about sharing, participating, comprehending, being implicated; and here I am talking about Cavafy’s erotic poems as a whole, taking the ‘Days’ poems as its exemplary metonym.

If Cavafy’s erotic poems constantly tease the idea of self-exposure and erotic confession, if they are, then, about the homosexual voice speaking, they are also, crucially, about looking at – and sometimes even about contemplating the act of looking at – other people’s erotic experience, confessions, acts and lives. This is what I consider, as a final point, to be the ethical potentiality of Cavafy’s erotic poetry. The poetics of the new phase of eros and the tropes of identification and pleasure they introduce in the retelling of erotic experience produce strategies of ethical implication for the teller and the onlooker (and in this I include the reader) as their necessary component. We are in a domain first glimpsed in the decision ‘to enlighten and move those who are *made like me*’ and in that phrase ‘someone else *made like me* will appear’. This is a domain of a homobiographics influenced by the larger sexological discourse of the early twentieth century and shaped by the liberating potential of a new sexual knowledge. And within it, what eventually emerges is a *homopoetics* that radically implicates, while also revolutionizing, aesthetics, erotics and ethics.

SEKE, the KKE and the language question

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This article presents an overview of SEKE and the KKE's views on the language question between 1918 and 1936. By examining unpublished sources, shifts in the party's views become discernible which cannot be attributed solely to changes in the language debates. The article introduces two innovations: it argues that there is a correlation between political changes within the KKE and transformations in its views on language, and analyses these with reference to ideas on language in the USSR. Studying these views augments our knowledge of a relatively neglected dimension of the language question. Moreover, as the influence of Marxism on some Greek intellectuals increased in this period, its findings can be used to elucidate aspects of literary production.

Introduction

Studies on the language question have mostly focused on debates within literary, academic and state circles. As a result, when references are made to the stance of the Κομμουνιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδας (KKE) towards the issue in the period of study (for example, by Mackridge, Beaton, Horrocks),¹ they are rather isolated and brief. A notable exception is Moschonas,² who provides an extensive account of the KKE's stance towards the language debates. However, he considers the period 1924–34 as a continuum and errs when claiming that the party's views 'are not, in any case, at variance with the official communist theory, as it would be codified later on the basis of Stalin's writings'.³ Investigation of the party's publications shows that, as the language question became even more politicized during the 1920s and 1930s, the KKE began to engage in these debates and modified its views, introducing new approaches and dimensions. Studying the ideas on language of the KKE and its predecessor, the Σοσιαλιστικό Εργατικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος (SEKE), on the one hand will enrich our knowledge and understanding

1 For example, P. Mackridge, *Language and National Identity in Greece, 1766–1976* (Oxford 2009) 292, 310.

R. Beaton, *An Introduction to Modern Greek Literature* (Oxford 1999) 320.

G. Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers* (Chichester 2010) 459.

2 E. Moschonas, "Ένας αιώνας Δημοτικισμού", in E. Moschonas (ed.), *Αλ. Πάλλης, Μπρονσός* (Athens 1975) γγ'-ρκα'.

3 Ibid., οβ'.

of the language debates; on the other hand, as the influence of Marxism on some Greek intellectuals increased in this period, the study of SEKE and the KKE's stance on the issue can be used to elucidate aspects of contemporary literary production, as it may have influenced the preference and use of demotic by literary authors.

By presenting SEKE and the KKE's ideas on the language question as expressed in their publications, this article introduces new sources of information and lays the foundations for a more extensive and systematic study of these views. The analysis begins with SEKE's formation in 1918 and concludes in 1936, when Metaxas' dictatorial regime banned political parties and their publications. This periodization reflects political changes within SEKE and the KKE, which, it will be argued, can be related to the development of its ideas and positions towards the language question.

1918 to 1924

In the early twentieth century, Greece underwent major territorial, politico-ideological and social transformations which prepared the scene for the creation of a Marxist party. Although earlier efforts, mainly by the group known as the Κοινωνιολογική Εταιρεία (1908), to create a mass party representing the interests of labour were unsuccessful, this changed in 1918, when the convergence of several socialist groups and individuals resulted in the formation of SEKE and the Γενική Συνομοσπονδία Εργατών Ελλάδος. These early efforts were further facilitated by the acquisition of part of the region of Macedonia by the Greek state in 1913. The incorporation of the workers and their political organizations formerly outside the Greek borders strengthened the ranks of existing socialist forces. The multi-ethnic socialist organization known as the 'Federation', which was formed in Thessaloniki in 1909,⁴ was at that time the most important socialist organization and played a key role in setting up SEKE. Nevertheless, the new party lacked ideological consistency, incorporating an amalgam of divergent views; internal debates concerning its political strategy and organizational model (whether to follow reformism or the Bolshevik model) were often intense. Moreover, the new domestic situation following the Asia Minor Catastrophe of 1922 caused a further restructuring of social forces, transforming the political environment. Amidst the economic and politico-ideological crisis, the initial success of the Russian Revolution stimulated ideological discussions favourable to the Left, although this was not matched by significant electoral gains for SEKE.

Regarding developments in the language question, by 1918 Psycharis had presented the first standardized version of demotic. The advocates of demotic had been brought together in the Demoticist movement and the pedagogical pressure group, Educational Society, had been established by Demoticists in 1910. The language debates had already been influenced by Marxism through Skliros' very influential book *To*

4 The organization's original name was *Federación Socialista Laboradera*, a Spanish title attributable to the founders, who were Spanish-speaking Jews of Thessaloniki.

Κοινωνικόν μας Ζήτημα (1907), written in simple *katharevousa*. In this publication, Skliros had linked the language question with the ‘social question’ and the emancipation of the newly-formed working class, and had argued that the roots of the language question were to be found in the Greek social and political system. A different proposition came from the Educational Society, which, instead of fundamental social change, advocated educational reforms to benefit the nation. The society emphasized the introduction of demotic into primary schools, and its bulletin became a forum for demoticist ideas on language and education.⁵ The bulletin also acquired a regulatory function by normalizing demotic: it proposed a second model of a standardized demotic which made concessions to *katharevousa*. This model gradually superseded Psycharis’ earlier standardized version which, as far as possible, had avoided concessions to *katharevousa*.

Despite the impact of Marxism on the language debates in this period, SEKE’s involvement in them was limited. Being in the process of organizational and ideological consolidation, it was not in a position to have a clear and consistent line. More importantly, in the early twentieth century, language debates were largely confined to the bourgeois world and did not engage the majority of the population.⁶ It is therefore not difficult to see why SEKE chose to restrict its contribution: it endeavoured to represent the interests of the working class and engaged its meagre resources in issues that concerned that class.

SEKE’s limited number of statements on language matters, as evidenced in its programme and in infrequent comments in its publications, shows that it was not indifferent to the language question. In 1919, the party’s programme (written in *katharevousa*) called for the introduction of demotic into all levels of education along with other educational demands.⁷ Furthermore, as shown by an anonymous article published in *Πιζοσπάστης* in 1921 (the earliest reference to the language question in the newspaper since the party assumed its political control in 1920), SEKE acknowledged the benefits of introducing demotic into education. The author stated, also in simple *katharevousa*, that the party often ought to espouse causes which were not of a socialist nature: even though education in demotic was not a socialist measure, the party welcomed it.⁸ Thus, although for SEKE the issue was not apolitical, it was essentially a bourgeois educational matter, peripheral to more pressing demands.

Thus, unlike Skliros, SEKE did not believe that the use of one or the other linguistic variety related to the struggle for socialism. It admired Skliros as ‘a great personality among Greek intellectuals’ who ‘told the truth about language’⁹ and, in 1923, it

5 Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, 266. Psycharis opposed the Society on the basis that its educational focus divided Demoticism.

6 Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, 292.

7 See *To KKE. Επίσημα κείμενα* I (1918-24) (Athens 1963) 9.

8 ‘Το κόμμα μας και η Τρίτη Διεθνής’, *Πιζοσπάστης*, 14 March 1921. All translations are mine and all references to *Πιζοσπάστης* are from the digitized archives of the series at the National Library of Greece using the search facility of the site; available at <http://efimeris.nlg.gr/ns/main.html>

9 See ‘Γ. Σκληρός’, *Πιζοσπάστης*, 19 January 1920.

advertised his book *Η Φιλολογία του πολέμου και της ειρήνης* and made it available in the Socialist Bookshop (the party's bookshop).¹⁰ Nevertheless, it used both varieties of Modern Greek in its publications: for example, *Σοσιαλιστικό Κόμμα Ελλάδος, Αρχαί και το πρόγραμμα* (1919) was written in simple *katharevousa*, whereas both *Εργάτης και μηχανές* (1919) and *Το Κομμουνιστικό Μανιφέστο* (1919) were translated into demotic. It seems that translations tended to be rendered in demotic, but further research is needed to verify this assertion. In any case, by choosing to translate the *Communist Manifesto* into demotic, SEKE implicitly acknowledged that this linguistic variety was as appropriate for theoretical discussions and abstract ideas as *katharevousa*. The parallel use of both varieties was not unique to SEKE: in 1919 the Socialist Party's newspaper *Σοσιαλισμός* contained articles both in simple *katharevousa* and in demotic.

Moreover, during the interwar years, both demotic and *katharevousa* underwent changes: the former was simplified, a mix of demotic and *katharevousa* became more frequent¹¹ and demotic was standardized and codified. Indeed, the translation of the *Communist Manifesto* (1919) was written in a demotic mixed with some morphological features from *katharevousa*: for example, the inflection *-εως* (feminine noun, genitive singular) was used throughout the translation, as in *τάξεως*, instead of the demotic inflection *-ης*.¹² But demotic progressively emerged as the party's favoured form, increasingly used more frequently in its press: Mackridge notes that in the early 1920s most articles in *Ριζοσπάστης* were in *katharevousa* and some in demotic, whereas the editorials gradually moved from *katharevousa* to mixed language and then to demotic.¹³

Aristotelis Sideris, who was at the time in charge of the party's ideological work and prefaced the translation of the *Communist Manifesto*, was critical of what he saw as linguistic extremes used by some Demoticists. Referring to the Demoticist literary author Kostas Hatzopoulos' use of demotic in the latter's translation of the *Communist Manifesto* (1913), Sideris reproached him: 'the translator's fanatical commitment to linguistic homogeneity' often hindered the pleasant reading of the book.¹⁴ In their effort to write in a pure form of demotic, some Demoticists often employed uncommon linguistic forms that Sideris was keen to avoid by mixing the two varieties. In other words, for SEKE, a consistent demotic devoid of any forms of *katharevousa* would not necessarily facilitate comprehension, but might in fact hinder it.

SEKE's decision to use demotic in some of its publications is significant because of the social function of *katharevousa* as the variety usually employed to express complex ideas and meanings. The choice of variety could affect the reception of a work. In 1924,

10 See the advertisement 'Νέες εκδόσεις', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 14 April 1923.

11 A. Frangoudaki, *Η γλώσσα και το έθνος, 1880–1980: Εκατό χρόνια αγώνες για την αυθεντική ελληνική γλώσσα* (Athens 2001) 59.

12 For more details and examples, see C. Delistathi, *Translation and Political Engagement; A Case Study of the Translations of the Communist Manifesto into Greek, 1919–1951*, unpublished PhD thesis, Middlesex University, 2011, 185–6.

13 Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, 292.

14 A. Sideris, 'Εισαγωγή', in K. Marks and F. Engels, *Το Κομμουνιστικό Μανιφέστο* (Athens 1919) ε'.

Giannis Kordatos (who served as SEKE's general secretary from 1920 to 1924 and supported demotic) wrote his book *Η κοινωνική σημασία της Ελληνικής Επανάστασης του 1821* (1924) in *katharevousa*. In his epilogue (written in demotic) he explained that, apart from pressure from his publisher who preferred *katharevousa*, he also favoured this version because '[t]he student and scholarly world hasn't yet rid itself of its hollow linguistic tooth – *katharevousa* – and, because of linguistic prejudice, it often doesn't read a useful book written in the language of the people'.¹⁵ Writing in demotic might jeopardize the reception of a work and even result in its rejection as insignificant, because of the preconception that a text written in demotic may not be noteworthy.¹⁶ SEKE's preference for a mixed demotic, as well as the criticism of Hatzopoulos' linguistic choices as extreme, shows the party's determination to reach as wide an audience as possible and its awareness of the importance of language to this end.

1924 to 1930

In 1924, SEKE became a Communist Party and changed its name to KKE. After the KKE became a full member of the Comintern, its views on language were modified. In the period between 1925 and 1931, as well as state persecution, it also faced an internal crisis. The process of becoming a Communist Party was far from smooth and was marked by intense internal ideological struggle. The KKE's membership in the Comintern meant that its future became inextricably linked with developments in the USSR and the Comintern itself. For this reason, it is important to consider two very significant developments in the communist movement because they affected the KKE's political identity and its stance vis-à-vis the language question, more evidently from 1930 onwards (see next section). Firstly, in the 1920s, after Stalin became leader of the USSR, the country itself and the parties affiliated to the Comintern experienced fundamental political and ideological alterations, usually referred to as Stalinization, which were not endorsed immediately either by the Bolshevik party or by the Communist Parties in the Comintern. These changes also affected the KKE, which, until 1931, underwent a period of turbulent transformation. From 1926 onwards, several members began to express the view that the party was in the process of becoming bureaucratic and undemocratic, and they formed factions within it that aimed, among other things, to democratize it and to communicate to its membership the full range of views expressed in the Comintern. Opposition to the party's overall direction turned into a sustained political struggle between factions which intensified between 1927 and 1928 and resulted in the departure and expulsion of prominent members such as Pantelis Pouliopoulos, the party's former General Secretary, who would later lead the Trotskyist group Spartakos.

15 Kordatos, cited in Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, 291.

16 C. Delistathi, 'Socio-political constraints in the production and reception of the *Communist Manifesto*', in J. Boéri and C. Maier (eds), *Compromiso social y traducción/interpretación: Translation/Interpreting and Social Activism* (Granada 2010) 89.

The second change was a product of these processes and concerned the relationship between the KKE and the rest of the Left. In 1927, the KKE declared its intention to strengthen the party against rival left-wing forces, which it perceived as 'hostile organizations, reactionary at heart, but which are hidden behind the mask of communism and of communist teaching'.¹⁷ In accordance with the Comintern's analysis, articulated in 1928 at its Sixth Congress, that social democracy was the main enemy of communism and that fascism was a form of social democracy, the KKE hardened its line against the social-democratic political formations and referred to them as 'social-fascist'. Later, the Trotskyists were also proclaimed 'Trotskyite-fascists', a charge that was used with varying intensity beyond the period of study. In turn, Trotskyists would retaliate by calling the KKE's leadership 'a pseudo-communist bureaucracy'.¹⁸

In this period, the KKE showed a more active interest in the language question. The first reason for this shift relates to developments in the language question, which in the mid-1920s became more politicized: on the one hand, the influence of Marxism on Demoticism was strengthened as a number of the Educational Society's supporters (most notably Dimitris Glinos) adopted a Marxist approach to the language question. This was exploited by the opponents of demotic: as Mackridge notes, from 1925 to 1926, when the dictator Pangalos was in power, the government campaigned to associate demotic and Demoticism with communism and Pangalos openly accused the most extreme Demoticists of being communists.¹⁹ This occurred despite the fact that the KKE was critical of Demoticism (see below). On the other hand, the convergence of some Demoticists with Marxism gave an impetus to discussions within the KKE with important consequences for both the KKE and the language debates: it initiated a public discussion in the party's publications and, consequently, assisted in carrying the language debates beyond the confines of the literary, academic and governmental milieus to a broader, non-specialist audience. At the time of the Educational Society's split in 1927, *Ριζοσπάστης* published several articles on the language question, in effect enlarging the audience of the debates and the number of potential participants who engaged in them.²⁰ In 1929 the Educational Society collapsed due to internal differences.

The second reason for the change in the KKE's stance concerns transformations in the social role of demotic and *katharevousa*. The polarization between Marxists and non-Marxists within the Demoticist movement, the intensified politicization of the issue ensuing from its real and imaginary links with communism and the persecution of communists, who were more likely to use demotic, by the Greek state (particularly from 1929 with the Idionymo law), may have contributed to what Frangoudaki calls a process of

17 'Αι αποφάσεις του Γ' Τακτικού Συνεδρίου του κόμματος', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 16 April 1927.

18 Maximos, quoted in Milios, 'Ο Μαρξισμός στο μεσοπόλεμο και ο Σεραφεΐμ Μάξιμος', *Θέσεις* 26 (1989), electronic edition: http://www.theseis.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=242&Itemid=29 [accessed 24/05/12].

19 Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, 290.

20 See the series of articles titled 'Απ' αφορμή μιας διακήρυξης του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30 and 31 August 1927.

change in the social function of both forms in the interwar years: preference for *katharevousa* or demotic gradually began to be associated in people's minds with ideological positions and social and political beliefs,²¹ a process that was to be completed at the end of the Civil War. Thus, it is easy to see why the KKE endeavoured to exclude *katharevousa* from its publications in this period.

The third reason relates to educational concerns. The KKE's need to instruct its members in Marxist ideas was pressing; to this end it set up the Propaganda and Statistics Bureau (1925) and organized regular political lessons.²² The use of language in a way that facilitated understanding within sections of the population less likely to have an education and know *katharevousa* was important in the venture to disseminate Marxist theory and popularize the party's ideas. As stated in the party's Educational Programme, the learning needs of workers and peasants should be addressed through the simplest and most accessible analyses,²³ and the choice of linguistic form was central to this endeavour. Indeed, between 1925 and 1929, the KKE began to use demotic more frequently in its publications and from 1927 onwards its official party texts were written in demotic.²⁴ The variety of demotic used in *Πιζοσπάστis* in the late 1920s was closer to the Educational Society's demotic than to Psycharis' version.²⁵ Thus, practical educational requirements and the further politicization of the language question, as well as the broadening audience of the debates and the changing social functions of demotic and *katharevousa*, forced the KKE to select demotic as its preferred language of publication and so to adopt an unequivocal position to the language question. In the meantime, as regards the overall intellectual production, in the interwar years demotic made significant inroads into scholarly works as some writings in science, philosophy, literary criticism, sociology and psychology were written in demotic,²⁶ elevating its status to a variety appropriate for academic discourse.

For the KKE, language was now explicitly recognized as an instrument that facilitated communication between the party and its audience. In 1926, the columnist in the first article to appear in *Πιζοσπάστis* specifically on the language question, praised the party's 'serious effort to write [the newspaper] in demotic', an effort which did not originate from the fact that 'we, the workers, are supposedly Demoticists like the pedants of the Educational Society', or 'because we believe that the world will change if we accept Mr Psycharis' grammatical gospel'; rather, it was asserted that, 'we write in demotic so that [others] can understand what we want to say and we prefer to read demotic so we can understand what we read. That's all'.²⁷ Thus, the KKE did not side with Demoticism and disapproved of both of the prevalent views within Demoticism, namely Psycharis'

21 Frangoudaki, *Η γλώσσα και το έθνος*, 61.

22 'Το μορφωτικό πρόγραμμα του κόμματος', *Πιζοσπάστis*, 11 January 1925.

23 Ibid.

24 Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, 291.

25 Ibid., 292.

26 Frangoudaki, *Η γλώσσα και το έθνος*, 62.

27 'Η δημοτική', *Πιζοσπάστis*, 31 August 1926.

rigid prescriptiveness and the Society's version of demotic which was more tolerant of *katharevousa*. This is very important because, firstly, as discussed above, Demoticists were accused of being communists, particularly from 1925 onwards, despite the fact that the KKE had dissociated itself from them. Secondly, despite the KKE's criticism of the Educational Society's version of demotic, the party used a variety approximating that of the Society, as mentioned above; thus its criticism was politically motivated.

Moreover, unlike the Demoticists (both Psycharists and the followers of the Educational Society) who preferred demotic for its nation-unifying potential, the KKE favoured this variety because of its function as an effective communicative channel: it facilitated the dissemination of Marxist ideas to those unlikely to know *katharevousa*. In turn, the audience could communicate with a party that spoke its language. This view, which was not generated by a particular theory of language, was closer to Skliros' analysis, which postulated that the awakening of the working class would be facilitated by the employment of demotic.²⁸

In contrast to the Educational Society's emphasis on the reform of primary education, the KKE argued that 'demoticism is remote from the plight of the masses', and called for a struggle against the social system that prevented the education of the poor,²⁹ for the reform of the entire educational system, an increase in government spending to end the chronic underfunding of education, and the improvement of teachers' remuneration, training and working conditions.³⁰ Although the KKE viewed the language reform favourably, it opposed the Society's limited agenda. It argued that without far-reaching social change, language reform would not improve education or increase literacy levels among the population. Thus, the KKE rejected the Demoticists' idea that the resolution of the language question would cure social problems such as illiteracy.

The KKE's perspective inevitably determined its position towards developments within the Demoticist movement. After the split of the Educational Society in 1927, it welcomed the Society's new Marxist orientation, but remained critical of its insistence on educational reform. According to *Ριζοσπάστης*, after the split the Society consisted of democrats, socialist sympathizers and Marxist teachers and the paper considered a crucial task to be that of initiating a critique of the Society's reformist principles. Nevertheless, in 1928, the KKE's journal *Νέα Επιθεώρηση* declared Demoticism to be 'an important weapon' for the working class.³¹ Given that the Society had split, this may indicate that the columnist referred to Marxist Demoticists, now crediting them with a pivotal role in the class struggle, and that the KKE's views on language matters were beginning to change; in fact they did indeed change, more clearly so in the 1930s.

28 For more details see the series of articles titled 'Απ' αφορμή μιας διακήρυξης του Εκπαιδευτικού Ομίλου', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30 and 31 August 1927.

29 'Δημοτικισμός και μπουρζουαζία', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 18 January 1925.

30 Pouliopoulos cited in G. Kordatos, *Δημοτικισμός και Λογιωτατισμός* (Athens 1974 [1st edition 1927]) 173–5.

31 Αnon., 'Επίλογοι: Δημοτικισμός και αντίδραση', *Νέα Επιθεώρηση* (Α' περίοδος), 1928, no. 10, 318.

1930 to 1936

In the 1930s, the KKE's views on the language question were again modified due to transformations within the Demoticist movement and the party. In this period, the political associations implied by the use of one or the other linguistic form (a process under way since the 1920s) were reconfirmed. Writing in demotic tended to be understood as a sign of left-wing political allegiance, whereas adherence to *katharevousa* was seen as an indicator of political conservatism, increasingly equated with the political Right and the preservation of the existing status quo.³²

The party's influence on Greek politics increased in the 1930s: between 1931 and 1932 its membership rose by 120%, by 1934 it had increased by 150% (within one and a half years), and between 1935 and 1936 it more than doubled.³³ The repression of left-wing activists and trade unionists, particularly after the implementation of the Idionymo Law of 1929, was perhaps the most decisive factor in labour radicalization and in increasing recruitment to the communist ranks.³⁴ The party's enhanced appeal was also reflected in electoral votes: in the 1935 elections the KKE took almost 10% of the vote.³⁵

In the meantime, in 1931, the Comintern had appointed the KKE's leadership, headed by Nikos Zachariadis, thus ending the internal strife, aligning the party fully with the Comintern and its new policies, and marking its full Stalinization. In line with these changes, in January 1934 the KKE made its new analysis official: a proletarian revolution in Greece would be preceded by an intermediate stage, a 'bourgeois-democratic' revolution. To substantiate this change, it offered an analysis of Greek society that may be summarized as follows: Greece was a capitalist society with 'important feudal remnants',³⁶ where the development of the forces of production was at a low level; circumstances which rendered the conditions for a socialist revolution 'unripe'. This analysis required that, before the struggle for socialism, the Communist Party support its national bourgeoisie in its quest for democracy.³⁷ Along these lines, a bourgeois-democratic revolution was necessary in order to wipe out the feudal structures and develop the forces of production necessary for a socialist revolution.

As mentioned above, by this time the relationship between the KKE and other Marxist-oriented organizations had already changed, with the former branding its adversaries as agents of the bourgeoisie. However, the social-democratic forces did not threaten the KKE's position. As Mavrogordatos notes, these groups failed to create a lasting

32 Beaton, *An Introduction*, 321.

33 G. Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922–1936* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1983) 149.

34 Ibid., 146.

35 R. Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge 2002) 113.

36 'Απόφαση για την κατάσταση της Ελλάδας και τα καθήκοντα του κόμματος', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 21 January 1934.

37 Ibid.

political party despite their influence within the labour movement.³⁸ Instead, the influence of Trotskyism was much more significant and threatening for the KKE. The most important organizations on the Left that contested the KKE's interpretation of Marxism and supported the International Left Opposition were the Αρχεῖον του Μαρξισμού and Σπάρτακος, the former being the larger of the two. They aroused the KKE's hostility because of their critique of Stalinism (mainly Spartakos), but also for practical reasons, because they challenged the KKE's position within the labour movement (mainly the Archive). As Kardasis notes, between 1929 and 1934 Trotskyism had considerable influence and between 1926 and 1928 the Archive's membership was larger than that of the KKE.³⁹ For these reasons, the KKE's most ruthless polemic was reserved for the Trotskyists.

In this context of the transformation of the social role of demotic and *katharevousa*, of the Stalinization of the KKE, and of the ideological struggle both against bourgeois ideology and against the Marxist-oriented Left, the KKE began to take a more active part in language debates. A combination of the clearer political associations of demotic with the Left, and, by this time, the KKE's familiarity with the prevalent views on language in the USSR (see below) explains its increased attention to language matters. Changes were evident in *Πιζοσπάστης*, which, as Mackridge states, was written exclusively in demotic from 1932 onwards.⁴⁰ The KKE sought to engage its readership in the language debates. In 1934, its cultural journal *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι* conducted a survey requesting readers to respond to a questionnaire aimed at exploring their views on the language question. They could comment on issues such as why the language question had not been resolved and when and how it could be settled.⁴¹ Now demotic was explicitly related to class struggle: 'the struggle for demotic is indivisible from the overall struggle of the proletariat and interrelated with it'; although not the focus of the struggle, it was nevertheless extremely important.⁴² Whereas previously the party's approach to the language question was primarily pragmatic, in other words that use of demotic would help it reach a wider audience, now it became a contested issue in the class struggle in its own right.

This new approach to language matters was not unique to Greece. In the 1930s, a comparable change of outlook occurred within the Norwegian Labour Party (Norway also had a dual linguistic code). Similarly to the KKE, the Norwegian Labour Party reinterpreted class struggle 'to include not only the economic but also the linguistic liberation

38 Mavrogordatos, *Stillborn Republic*, 148.

39 V. Kardasis, 'Η περιπέτεια του ελληνικού Τροτσκισμού', *Ελευθεροτυπία*, 26 July 2002.

40 Mackridge, *Language and National Identity*, 292.

41 See 'Γιατί δεν λύνεται το γλωσσικό ζήτημα;', *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι*, 1934, no. 4, 158; 'Η έρευνά μας για το γλωσσικό ζήτημα', *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι*, 1934, no. 6, 223–5; 'Η έρευνά μας για το γλωσσικό ζήτημα', *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι*, 1934, no. 8, 307; 'Η έρευνά μας για το γλωσσικό ζήτημα', *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι*, 1934, no. 11, 451–2.

42 F.P. [= Foula Porfyrogeni?] and Trapezountios, 'Γύρω στο γλωσσικό ζήτημα', *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι* (περίοδος Γ') 4 (1935), no. 3–5, 95–8.

of the common people'.⁴³ The language ideal was no longer the language of the educated elite or 'nationalistic Norwegian', but 'folk speech'.⁴⁴ A parallel shift of focus towards the folk language occurred within the KKE, which now advocated that true demotic was 'the language of the people' as spoken by peasants and workers.

Moreover, both parties formulated their ideas on language with reference to developments within the USSR. This happened regardless of the fact that, as Haugen notes, the Norwegian Labour Party had already cast off its political ties with Moscow.⁴⁵ Despite this dissociation, when Hans Vogt, a party linguist who later became professor of Romance languages and General Linguistics, wrote the pamphlet *Language Strife and Class Struggle* in 1932, he cited Stalin extensively and praised the Soviet Union for its work on national languages.⁴⁶ Similarly, the KKE referred to the prevalent theory of language in the USSR, namely the Japhetic theory, to formulate its own views and for this reason a study of the KKE's ideas on language in this period should also consider this theory. As will be shown below, it is incorrect to claim, as Beaton does,⁴⁷ that no distinct theory of language was developed or articulated during the course of the language debates.

From the late 1920s, Nikolai Marr (1865-1934) was the USSR's foremost linguist. His Japhetic theory or 'New Theory of Language', which is now discredited, became the official state theory until 1950. Marr formulated his hypotheses about the origins of languages and the relationship between language and society. He rejected the genealogical classification of languages and considered the concept of language family as a racial account.⁴⁸ In his view, language was a feature of the superstructure, reflecting, directly or indirectly, the characteristics of the economic basis of a society;⁴⁹ different stages in the development of a socio-economic system generate different stages in the development of a language.⁵⁰ Moreover, Marr argued that the class structure of a particular society controls the linguistic structures and typological features of a language, among other factors, so that a change in the class stratification will result in language change.⁵¹ As language mirrors class differentiations and antagonisms, there can be no single unified language in a society. Instead, a unified language can exist only in a classless society.⁵²

43 E. Haugen, *Language Conflict and Language Planning: The Case of Modern Norwegian* (Cambridge, MA 1966) 104.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid., 106.

46 Ibid., 116.

47 Beaton, *An Introduction*, 346.

48 M. Lähteenmäki, 'Nikolai Marr and the idea of a unified language', *Language & Communication* 26 (2006) 285-95 [286].

49 Ibid., 286.

50 Ibid., 290.

51 Ibid., 286.

52 Ibid., 290.

Based on this hypothesis, Marr developed the concept of ‘class languages’ and postulated that

a national, all-national language does not exist, but there is a class language – and languages of one and the same class in different countries, given an identity of the social structure, reveal more typological relationships to each other than languages of different classes in one and the same country, one and the same nation.⁵³

The KKE was acquainted with Marr’s views. In an article in *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι*, the columnist stated his intention to discuss the language question with reference to Marr’s ideas and opined that ‘as Marr teaches us, in contemporary class societies there is and can be no single common national language’; not only is there no common national Greek language, but there are several Greek languages.⁵⁴ According to Marr, he continued, Pontic is not a dialect, but a language of groups of people whose economic and, therefore, cultural development is arrested.⁵⁵ Like Marr, he acknowledged that language is a super-structural feature and proposed that each group use and develop its own mother tongue.⁵⁶

Echoing Marr, Skytalis, writing in the same journal, stated that language is a product of the actions of social beings at the point of production.⁵⁷ His opinion that Greek workers and peasants were unable to understand either the *katharevousa* or the demotic of the Greek bourgeoisie is evocative of Marr’s concept of ‘class language’. Skytalis applied Marr’s analysis of the relationship between language and society to argue that ‘diglossia’ or ‘polyglossia’ is the reflection of class antagonisms on the superstructure and particularly on language.⁵⁸ Three factors controlled the ‘social causes’ of the language situation in Greece: a) the arrested development of Greek capitalism, b) the feudal remnants in Greek society and c) the impact of these remnants ‘on the socio-ideological superstructure and, therefore, in the evolution of language, literature, art, science, etc.’⁵⁹ The dual linguistic situation in Greece could only be resolved through the proletariat’s involvement and as part of its broader struggle.⁶⁰ The discussion of the language question with reference to Marr’s analysis is very important because for the first time a theory of language is introduced into the debate and because it attempts to account for the linguistic situation in Greece with reference to this theory.

53 N.Ia. Marr ‘Pochemu tak trudno stat’ lingvistom-teoretikom?’ in: N.Ia. Marr (ed.), *Iazykovedenie I materialism* (Leningrad 1929) 1–56 [33], cited in Lähteenmäki ‘Nikolai Marr’, 290.

54 E. I. Trapezountios, ‘Η έρευνά μας για το γλωσσικό ζήτημα’, *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι*, 1934, no. 8, 307.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 P. G. Skytalis, ‘Τύρω στο γλωσσικό ζήτημα’, *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι* (περίοδος Γ΄) 4 (1935), no. 6, 130–3 [130].

58 Ibid., 131.

59 Ibid., 130.

60 Ibid., 131. Glinos develops this thesis in a series of articles titled ‘Η αστική δημοκρατία και τα προβλήματα του πολιτισμού στην Ελλάδα’, *Ριζοσπάστης*, 11, 14, 18 and 22 March 1934.

During this period, the KKE's stance towards demotic as the language of scholarly works and abstract thought was contradictory. Whereas in 1934 Glinos contended that demotic had proved to be 'mature enough to express even the most abstract meanings',⁶¹ a year later *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι* argued that 'Demotic has not been developed in theoretical and abstract subjects'.⁶² Nevertheless, both agreed on the necessity to cultivate demotic. To this end, Glinos urged his readers to study the spoken language and Demoticist literature:

The two sources that will give us the linguistic form on which we'll crystallize our socialist civilization will be the *common* [emphasis in the original] language spoken by the Greek workers and peasants and the *literary* language which, based on the people's oral speech and folk songs, was shaped by Solomos, through to Psycharis and Varnalis.⁶³

As discussed in the previous section, in the late 1920s the KKE had adopted in its publications a version of demotic closer to that of the Educational Society. Now Glinos rejected that variety in favour of the oral language of the peasants and workers who constituted the vague category of 'the people'. Like Glinos, Skytalis argued in the party's publications that 'the current "demotic" is more an artificial, invented and schematic language than the living language of the people'.⁶⁴

References to the culture of rural populations can be found both in discussions within Greece and in the contemporary USSR. For the Demoticists in Greece these discussions concerned the relationship between national identity and folk traditions (it is worth remembering that for them modern Greek culture was the continuation of ancient Greek culture). In support of socialist realism, which in 1932 became the official method of artistic composition in the USSR, Maxim Gorky evaluated the acceptability of bourgeois works of literature in 1934: they were less valuable in comparison to folk literature, which expressed the authentic experience of the people.⁶⁵ Similarly, for Glinos, the folk traditions expressed the real experiences and feelings of the Greek 'people'. Although it is unclear if his preference for folk songs predates discussions in the USSR, Dounia argues that Gorky's stance was known to KKE intellectuals such as Glinos and became the party's official view from 1934,⁶⁶ at the time that Glinos was writing about 'the people' and their culture. Glinos' preference (similar to that of the Demoticists) for the language of the old folk songs of rural populations, instead of that of the contemporary *rebetika* of the urban poor, may be explained by the KKE's perception of the *rebetika* musicians as social outcasts, who did not conform to its idealized image of the

61 D. Glinos, 'Η αστική δημοκρατία και τα προβλήματα του πολιτισμού στην Ελλάδα', *Ριζοσπάστης*, 14 March 1934.

62 F. P. and Trapezountios, 'Γύρω στο γλωσσικό ζήτημα', 98.

63 D. Glinos, 'Το γλωσσικό ζήτημα', *Νέοι Πρωτοπόροι*, 1934, no. 5, 186–8 [187].

64 Skytalis, 'Γύρω στο γλωσσικό ζήτημα', 130.

65 C. Dounia, *Λογοτεχνία και πολιτική: τα περιοδικά της αριστεράς στο Μεσοπόλεμο* (Athens 1999) 416.

66 *Ibid.*, 420.

proletariat. By contrast, it could be argued that the folk songs were created by hard-working and uncorrupted people. Debates in the USSR reinforced this preference. Consequently, the 'language of the people', which expressed such traditions, had particular significance for the KKE. As a self-proclaimed representative of the interests of the Greek people, it could only adopt the variety of demotic that it assumed they spoke.

The increasing association of demotic with the political Left, and of *katharevousa* with the Right, was also employed as a weapon in the ideological battle within the Left. Moschonas draws our attention to the internal ideological battle within the KKE in the late 1920s, but views the party's shift in the 1930s to using demotic exclusively merely as a defence against the Trotskyists.⁶⁷ For example, Glinos opined that contrary to 'pseudo-socialists' like Aristotelis Sideris (the former leading member of SEKE who remained a reformist) who wrote in *katharevousa*, the 'vanguard of the proletariat', organized in the KKE, had settled the language question by using demotic in all party publications and functions.⁶⁸ This indicates that for the KKE the use of demotic had become a marker of politico-ideological differentiation, separating not only the Right from the Left, but also the real Marxists from the bogus ones.

Marr's ideas continued to shape the KKE's approach to language matters until the early 1950s. In 1950, Stalin published his *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*. In this he rejected the class character of language, pointed to the unity of national languages and denounced Marr and his theory. Marr was soon also denounced in Greece: in 1951 Petros Rousos, from the KKE's Politburo, introduced Stalin's new arguments about language and criticized Marr.⁶⁹

Conclusion

This article has addressed a relatively neglected dimension in the study of the language question, namely SEKE's and the KKE's ideas on the issue, and points to unpublished sources for further research. It argues that the party's different approaches to the language question can to some extent be related to developments within the language debates, but more importantly, also coincide with and reflect important changes in its political character. During the initial period of SEKE's formation, the language question was viewed as a bourgeois educational issue. Subsequently, when SEKE became a Communist Party and its political orientation was consolidated, the resolution of the language question was seen as part of a broader struggle for educational reform and wholesale social change. In the 1930s, the KKE, a Stalinist party, reformulated its overall political analysis and its approach to language matters: based on Marr's assumption that different social classes within a society had different languages, the language question became an

67 Moschonas, 'Ένας αιώνας δημοτικισμού', π', πβ'.

68 Glinos, 'Το γλωσσικό ζήτημα', 186–7.

69 See P. Rousos, 'Η διδασκαλία του συντρόφου Στάλιν και η ελληνική γλώσσα', part 1, *Νέος Κόσμος* 3 (1951), no. 4, 43–50 [43–4].

issue within the class struggle in its own right. This change of position tallied with the new functions of demotic and *katharevousa* in the 1920s and 1930s: it provided a clearer political orientation and thus, from the KKE's point of view, confirmed Marr's analysis of 'class language'.

By opting for an account of SEKE and the KKE's ideas on language and the language debates which emphasizes the effects of political landmarks in the history of the party and the communist movement, rather than solely cultural developments within Greece or shifts in the Demoticist movement and the language debates, this article has shown that there is a correlation between political changes within the KKE and transformations in its ideas on language. Thus it proposes a new methodological approach to the study of the party's stance on the language question that explains and contextualizes these changes in relation to broader international and local political struggles. It highlights the pivotal influence of Marxism on the cultural life of Greece and calls for a further study of the position(s) of the KKE and the Left in general vis-à-vis the language question. This indicates the need to acknowledge the importance, on the one hand, of political transformations within the Greek Left, and on the other, of developments in linguistic and cultural matters within the USSR.

Reviews

Tasos A. Karanastasis (1955–2010), *Ακολουθία του ανοσίου τραγογένη σπανού: χαρακτήρας και χρονολόγηση, μια ερμηνευτική προσέγγιση*. Thessaloniki: Kendro Vyzantinon Erevnon, 2010. Pp. 151.

Tasos Karanastasis died far too young. Visitors to the Egnatia offices of Kriaras' *Dictionary of Medieval Vernacular Greek* will remember him as this incredibly knowledgeable and, at the same time, incredibly modest intellectual, always willing to help out, always eager to share his knowledge with others. It is no secret that Tasos was the soul of this lexicographic project in the '80s and '90s. Tasos was a great man in his own unique way, and those who can discern greatness in others loved him for who he was and mourned his untimely passing. His closest friends have honoured him with two posthumous publications: a collection of articles¹ and the revised edition of his unpublished PhD thesis.²

This PhD thesis offers a new interpretation of the satirical text commonly called *Spanos*, but bearing the title *Office of the Impious Goat-Bearded Spanos* in the oldest manuscript (Vindob. Theol. gr. 244, 1st quarter, 16th C.). The text is a parody in the literal sense of the word (παρ-ωδία) inasmuch as it is set to well-known ecclesiastical melodies, but it is emphatically not a parody in the modern sense of the word: it does not ridicule the liturgy, the church or the clergy. Karanastasis offers many examples of priests and monks reciting the poem to the merriment of all assembled, with no one protesting or seeing any harm in it; in fact, the only ones to find fault with this allegedly 'blasphemous' text are academics, from Martin Crusius to Krumbacher. However, if *Spanos* is not directed against the church and its institutions, who or what is the target of this hilarious text? The traditional answer is that the text ridicules either beardless people in general or one particular beardless creature in particular (σπανός means 'having little to no facial hair'; *LSJ* translates it as 'with scanty beard'). Karanastasis' answer is that, although beardlessness is a major theme, the title refers to σπανός/ισπανός, 'Spaniard', i.e. 'Spanish Jew', and that the text alludes to the massive influx of Jews in 1492, when they were forced to leave Spain and moved to the Ottoman Empire.

Karanastasis builds his case with force and clarity, pointing out that (1) the author is a cleric, (2) the text parodies various hymns related to Lent and Easter, especially hymns that are sung on Good Friday, and (3) the text is replete with implicit and explicit references to rather disturbing antisemitic beliefs concerning Judas Iscariot and the Jews. However, the most remarkable discovery is the connection he establishes between *Spanos* and the repulsive custom of 'burning [an effigy of] the Jew at the stake' (το κάημι του Ιούδα/του Οβριού), an Easter custom that was widespread in the Orthodox world until quite recently. In the songs that Greeks used to sing when they burnt the 'Jew', one finds a striking parallel to the *Spanos*: χέζουμε τα γένια του, 'we shit on his beard' – shitting on Spanos' non-existent beard is a recurring motif in the text. Following in the footsteps of Eideneier, Karanastasis proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that the text of *Spanos* uses geographical terms and idiomatic words that all point in the direction of Eastern Thrace as the most likely place of composition.

Karanastasis' findings can be summarized as follows: the *Spanos* is related to the custom of 'burning the Jew' and is an antisemitic text produced in Eastern Thrace by a cleric who felt uneasy about the arrival of Spanish Jews in 1492 and afterwards. The only flaw in this otherwise convincing theory, as Karanastasis would be the first to admit, is that the earliest relevant Greek sources that refer to *Spanos*, Pachomios Rousanos and Gabriel Kalonas (both 16th C.), do not appear to be aware that the text makes fun of Spanish Jews, but assume that it refers to unlucky characters without beards (Rousanos) or a specific beardless character (Kalonas): see pp. 43–44 and 46. But it

1 Tasos A. Karanastasis (1955–2010), *Μεσαιωνικά και Νεοελληνικά Μελετήματα*. Thessaloniki 2010.

2 The collection of articles was edited by Vasilis Katsaros, the PhD thesis by Tasos Kaplanis.

obviously cannot be excluded that the time-specific reference to Spanish Jews was lost on later generations.

Ο Θεός ας αναπαύει την ψυχή του.

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Niels Gaul, *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantinische Sophistik. Studien zum Humanismus urbaner Eliten in der frühen Palaiologenzeit* [Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 10]. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011. Pp. 500.

Fair warning to the uninitiated: Byzantine rhetoric, that synonym for obscurity, verbosity and abstraction, the greatest impediment, and the key, to our understanding of Byzantine culture, is once again at large. Rather than experiencing a momentous comeback – for, in its timeless role as the Dame of Liberal Arts, rhetoric has never really left the limelight of modern academic research – these days it thrives under the direction of literary criticism, whose inspiring guidance holds out the promise of making a substantial contribution to our understanding of rhetorical practices, and their widespread influence on cultural processes in Byzantium and beyond.

This development is both underscored and advanced by the volume in hand, which the author himself aptly describes as ‘the first systematic attempt to contextualise the life and oeuvre of the late Byzantine gentleman scholar Thomas Magistros.’ Niels Gaul’s seminal monograph on one of the least-studied figures of late Byzantine civic humanism clearly shows how an adept use of textual archaeology (*pace* Foucault) can make a critical difference to an attempt to negotiate the uncharted realms of Palaiologan rhetorical writing. This theoretically sophisticated study also exemplifies the fact that any methodology, innovative or otherwise, can be successfully implemented only in conjunction with the basic tools of the trade – most essentially, the keen eye of a textual historian alert to the linguistic and stylistic subtleties of any primary material – and that the healthy blending of the two remains the most important precondition for any noteworthy advances in the field.

The opening pages of Gaul’s book remind us that modern scholarship has not been generous to Thomas Magistros. The literary output of this Byzantine intellectual has been deemed imitative and dry, and his classroom practice uninspired, while his most significant claim to fame, at least among classical scholars, who have judged Magistros on the merits of his philological credentials, has been his unusual ability to write essays in the manner of Aelius Aristides. The entirety of these sparse and incomplete observations, generated across a wide spectrum of research strands, has clearly proved far less stimulating to Gaul’s work than one single, long-forgotten observation from the pen of Max Treu describing Thomas Magistros as a ‘lebensvolle Persönlichkeit voll Fleisch und Blut, der auch als Mensch unseres Interesses wert ist.’ Treu went on to state: ‘Er steht mitten im Leben und nimmt lebhaften Anteil an dem Geschehe seiner Vaterstadt.’ Gaul’s meticulous evaluation of Treu’s premise presents us with thoroughly revealing results. On the most fundamental level, this volume succeeds in filling the substantial gap in our knowledge about the life and work of Thomas Magistros. Part Two in particular, presented as ‘a historicizing biography in a more traditional sense’, will definitively change our way of viewing this author, whom Gaul depicts in an impressive range of roles as a gentleman scholar, teacher, rhetor, monk, and, most enlighteningly, a public figure of great consequence. Equally significantly, this study revisits the esoteric world of the *pepaideuomenoi*, a statistically negligible but otherwise remarkably prominent social stratum made up of the Byzantine intellectual elite, by way of reevaluating their ‘archaizing sociolect’ that ‘generated, in Bourdeuan terms, the *habitus* which distinguished them from the rest of Byzantine society.’ The literary pursuits of these influential individuals, as Gaul conclusively shows using Magistros’s rhetorical output as a case study, far from being detached exercises in retrospective academic escapism, were in fact firmly anchored in the immediate circumstances of their authors, and, even more significantly, in the contemporary political life of their cities.

The book is based on the admirably clear concept of developing its arguments ‘vom Allgemeinen, Epochentypischen zum Speziellen, Biographischen’. This approach in turn makes it possible for Gaul to divide up his extensive subject matter and present it in two discrete sections. The examination of ‘the more general, typical of the period’ takes up much of Part One. Here, the author discusses scholarly life in late Byzantium, and the phenomenon of Late Byzantine civic humanism, or, as he defines it, the Late Byzantine Sophistic, as one of its most distinguished

features, which gave rise to the *theatron*, ‘a universally recognized and hierarchically organized practice’ of public performance that enjoyed exceptional popularity precisely in the early Palaiologan period. Two chapters in particular, *Theatres of Power* (Schauplätze der Macht) and *In the Imperial Theatron* (Im Theatron des Kaisers), represent the most significant contribution of this volume to modern scholarship on Thomas Magistros, and the intellectual milieu from which he sprang. They reexamine the pivotal episodes of Magistros’s life: his journey to Constantinople, his performance in the imperial *theatron*, and the far-reaching consequences of his decision to forsake the career of a high-ranking imperial official in the Byzantine capital for the life of a dedicated scholar and political activist in his native city. The discussion that follows (Das Erbe der zweiten Sophistik) explores the wider ramifications of these events, particularly with regard to the rising sophistic culture of Thessaloniki, and the revival of sophistic practices in this city, both of which are shown to have Thomas Magistros as their protagonist, if not their main instigator. Gaul persuasively argues that Magistros’ literary output, and specifically his rhetorical and hagiographical pieces, strongly promote the ideas of civic and spiritual values, by exhorting the people of Thessaloniki to take the right course of action in the times of utmost uncertainty and turmoil.

The picture that emerges from Gaul’s careful reading of Magistros’s rhetorical pieces is sophisticated and finely nuanced. He methodically examines Magistros’s literary persona and the many facets of his purposefully created authorial ethos, showing how a sensitive analysis and precise contextualization of rhetorical texts can expose implicit elements of their poetics, and provide detailed evidence of the creation and consumption of such compositions. Moreover, this line of investigation, it transpires, can also exercise a healthy dose of positivism: the biographical sketch which makes up the second part of the book is by no means secondary, but carries the specific purpose, in itself, of correcting and supplementing the extant information about Magistros, and of bringing to life Thessaloniki in the early fourteenth century as one of the most prominent landmarks in the late Byzantine ‘archipelago of cities’, and a hub of intellectual activity where intellectuals like Thomas Magistros employed Byzantine paideia as a powerful symbol of social distinction, a sophisticated instrument of political action, and the most enduring memento of their own accomplishments.

The results of Gaul’s immense endeavour are praiseworthy throughout, although its ambitious scope, and the comprehensive and elaborate arguments that it advances, carry some risk of overwhelming the methodical reader, who would probably feel more at home with a tighter, more sharply-focused volume. With this in mind, it would be misleading to commend this monograph as a page-turner certain to inspire in a wider scholarly readership breathless cover-to-cover reading. Specialists in the field of Byzantine literary culture, however, should expect a real treat: they are the target readership, and will most certainly relish this erudite, thorough and exhaustive study. Any complaints about its unwieldy format should therefore not be taken as a serious criticism. The unsatisfactory progress made so far in presenting and interpreting Palaiologan rhetorical material does not allow any justifiable complaints against the determined efforts of the very few outstanding scholars, among whom we count Niels Gaul, who has succeeded in narrowing the gap by going to such extraordinary lengths to elucidate this elusive and challenging topic.

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Lia Brad Chisacof (ed.), *Ρήγας. Ανέκδοτα κείμενα*. Athens: Panepistimiakes Ekdoseis Kyprou and Ekdoseis Gutenberg, 2011. Pp. 364.

This visually handsome volume contains an edition of two works attributed to Rigas Velestinlis: a fascinating but incomplete comedy entitled ‘Το σαγανάκι της τρέλας’, and a drastically shortened adaptation of a story by Marmontel, ‘L’Amitié à l’épreuve’. The texts are to be found in a unique manuscript housed in the state archives of Sibiu, Romania. In 1998 Chisacof published a highly inaccurate edition of these texts, with a Romanian translation, under the title *Rigas. Scrieri inedite*. The present volume is an attempt at a definitive edition, including a facsimile of every page of the manuscript as well as a glossary. Unlike the 1998 edition, the present one prints the texts in modern spelling and the monotonic system.

The title of ‘Το σαγανάκι της τρέλας’ (The tempest of madness), which is the only one of the works that concerns me here, is obscure to the modern reader, since this σαγανάκι is from the

Turkish *sağanak* 'storm'; it bears no relation to the well-known dish of the same name (from Turkish *saban*). The play is a satire on Nikolaos Mavrogenis, who arrives in Bucharest to occupy the princely throne of Wallachia and begins to exert his authority in a highly eccentric manner. Mavrogenis, who hailed from Paros and had previously served as Dragoman of the Ottoman Fleet, is like a fish out of water in landlocked Bucharest ('*αναθράφηκα από μικρό παιδί σαν παπί στη θάλασσα*', he says, p. 60). He dresses in nautical costume, uses nautical jargon and wants to run the state like a captain running a ship. It is clear that, in the eyes of the play's author, Mavrogenis is not 'one of us'; he is not from one of the Phanariot families that normally ruled the Danubian principalities. In fact, he explicitly distinguishes himself from the Phanariots, claiming that he is descended from the illustrious Venetian Morosini family. He is blithely ignorant of local geography and local etiquette. He is greedy and rapacious, and one character says of him: '*μέσον όρον ποτέ του δεν ηξεύρει, παρά ή υπερβολές, ή ελλείψεις: τρελαίνεται να ακούει διά σπαθιά, τουφέκια, μαρούτια και πολέμους*' (p. 70). He is obsessed by military bands, and he holds court sitting astride a canon placed inside a military campaign tent, from which ungainly position he dispenses arbitrary justice. He demands unquestioning obedience and goes about with a club in his hands to break the heads of the insubordinate. As for his domestic life, he is insanely jealous of his wife, whom he keeps shut indoors while he runs after other women. Worst of all, the character Feraris concludes, everyone at court seems to have been infected by Mavrogenis' madness (p. 216).

Despite the strong element of caricature, some aspects of the picture of Mavrogenis presented in the play are borne out by historical sources. However, the plot meanders, and it contains few truly theatrical scenes. Many characters who are mentioned in other characters' speeches don't appear on stage, and many incidents are narrated retrospectively instead of being acted out in front of the audience. The text of the play is incomplete. It suddenly breaks off with a cliffhanger: the Domna (the prince's wife) has given the courtier Apostolis a note to take to her lover (another courtier), who is in prison, while the whole court is in a state of agitation about something. We will never learn what's happening and what's about to happen.

Chisacof provides arguments (backed up by affidavits from palaeographers and graphologists) that the manuscript is written in Rigas' own hand. However, in view of evidence that has been adduced to the contrary, I have no wish to enter into this dispute; what interests me is the text itself.¹

Some turns of phrase in the play are uncannily reminiscent of the Constantinopolitan-Alexandrian Cavafy: as the servant Sophia says to the Domna (lamenting the lack of freedom accorded to women even in Bucharest, which is supposed to be freer than Constantinople), '*όπου και αν πηγαίνωμεν, κουβανούμεν την Πόλιν μαζί μας, όλο οι αυτές κλειδαριές, τα αυτά σφαλίσματα*' (p. 128).

The language of '*Το σαγανάκι της τρέλας*', like that of the contemporary comedy '*Ο Αλεξ-ανδροβόδας ο ασυνείδητος*' by Georgios Soutsos (expertly edited by Dimitris Spathis in 1995), provides a fascinating insight into the speech and mores of leading Greek circles in Constantinople and Bucharest. As in Soutsos' text, members of the princely family and its entourage occasionally appear to be using slang, as in the following exchange:

Sophia: '*Πού να τσατίσωμεν;*' ('Where shall we meet?')

Domna: '*Για κελάδισε τον Αποστόλη*' ('Call Apostolis') (pp. 130–1).

The play abounds with words and phrases of Turkish origin, and it includes some Romanian words too. In some cases characters utter whole sentences of Turkish as they code-switch between languages. Because of the importance of this play for the history of the Greek language, I wrote to Lia Chisacof after she had published the 1998 edition, urging her to produce a new edition in collaboration with a Turcologist. I am disappointed that she has failed to follow my advice. The glossary of the 2011 edition is inadequate, and often misleading, especially when it comes to the interpretation of words and phrases from Turkish.

The systematic inadequacies of the glossary include the following: a large number of the page references are erroneous; some of the Greek headwords are wrongly transcribed; a large number of Turkish etymons are misspelled, while some of them are actually non-existent in Turkish; and

1 The attribution to Rigas has been challenged by such authorities on the modern Greek theatre as Spyros Evangelatos, Walter Puchner and Dimitris Spathis.

many of the glosses belong to a different part of speech from the word being defined (e.g. the noun 'αγίρικον, το' is glossed as 'προσβάλλω').

Most importantly, many of the etymologies and meanings provided are erroneous. In many cases the confusion has come about because the editor has tried to look up a word or phrase in a dictionary without taking account of the context in which it appears in the text. To quote just three examples:

- 'ατζία' is said to be from 'κυпр. άκρη του ψωμιού // < τουρκ. acza: τμήμα, κομμάτι (αρχ.)', whereas it is the Romanian word *agie* 'office of the Agă', the Agă being an official in charge of public order;
- in the phrase 'έναν ματαρά χιντιστάν τζεβιζί ασημοδεμένον' (i.e. 'a flask or goblet made out of a coconut encased in silver') the word 'ματαρά' is interpreted as 'λμάνι στη σημερινή Σρι Λάνκα', while 'τζεβιζί' is glossed as '< τουρκ. cevez: μπρίκι' (the Turkish equivalent of μπρίκι is in fact *cezve*);
- 'μασσαλάδες' is said to be '< T *masal*: παραμύθια, ψέμματα', whereas the context ('καίουν αφεύκτως κεριά, και μασαλάδες', p. 158) suggests that this word should be read as *μεσαλάδες* (<T *meşale* 'torch, lantern').

Out of the thirty-four entries on the first page of the nine-page glossary, more than a dozen contain errors. To avoid weighing down this review with linguistic details, I have prepared a twenty-page list of corrections and comments ('Comments on Lia Brad Chisacof's glossary of Rigas') which can be consulted on my page of the website academia.edu. It is distressing that this important text should have been published with such an incompetently compiled glossary.

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Nikos Kazantzakis, *The Selected Letters of Nikos Kazantzakis*, edited and translated by Bien Peter. Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012. Pp. xxvii, 875.

Nikos Kazantzakis cultivated a wide variety of genres ranging from poetry, drama, and the novel to essays, travel books and children's literature. A genre that he was particularly passionate about is epistolography. The new annotated edition of Kazantzakis' epistles by Peter Bien provides for the first time a comprehensive overview of representative letters. Previously, only letters to certain individual recipients had been published; this volume contains a selection of letters to a wide variety of correspondents, including friends, relatives, fellow writers, publishers, and translators. It offers valuable insights into the author's letter-writing activities, and also sheds fresh light upon his personality and life.

The book contains an eight-page introduction by Bien, who is both the editor and translator of the letters. In the introduction he offers biographical information on Kazantzakis, explains his significance as a writer and emphasises his ardent passion for letter writing, characterising him as a 'maniacal epistolographer'. Bien goes on to describe the rationale behind his selection of the published letters. His criteria for choosing these particular letters are their intrinsic interest and the wish to represent all Kazantzakis' correspondents. The letters have been collected from the manuscripts of individual recipients, books, and periodicals, as well as from the archives of the Kazantzakis Museum, the Historical Museum of Heraklion, and the Prevelakis Archive at the University of Crete. Some of the letters are published here for the first time; others have been published in the past. Some were published in the volume *Τετρακόσια Γράμματα του Καζαντζάκη στον Πρεβελάκη*, Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Ελένης Καζαντζάκη, 1965. These letters are published in Bien's edition in their full form, i.e. including parts that had been omitted by Prevelakis because their content might have been offensive to living persons.

The introduction is supplemented by an eleven-page chronology, which is particularly useful for keeping track of Kazantzakis' life and work while reading the letters. The chronology is followed by the letters themselves. Bien's translation is faithful to the Greek original, and at the same time the English text is smooth and eloquent. The Cretan idiom, which is sometimes used by Kazantzakis, has also been accurately rendered. Each letter is followed by detailed explanatory notes which are helpful both for scholars and for the general reading public. They include information on the life and work of individuals mentioned in the letters as well as glosses for literary works, locations, historical events, and customs. The notes also clarify the provenance of the various quotations cited by Kazantzakis. Moreover, Bien's annotations of the letters elucidate

the relationship between Kazantzakis' life and his literary works. Certain typographical oversights, however, can be detected in the notes.¹

The letters are divided into eleven chronological sections, from 1902 to 1957. They cover fifty-five years of Kazantzakis' life, from his early years as an undergraduate student taking his first steps as an author until the last years of his life, during which his work achieved international success. Thus the content of the letters is diverse and multifaceted, encompassing a remarkably wide range of subjects. The letters are of great interest, since they offer insights into Kazantzakis' private thoughts, hopes, struggles, and literary aspirations. We can glean information about his everyday life, travel experiences, involvement in politics, literary projects, personal views on his own work, and response to criticisms of his literary production. Kazantzakis' life spanned a number of significant historical events (the Balkan wars, the Asia Minor disaster, the Axis occupation of Greece and the Greek civil war). He expresses his personal thoughts on these events and describes the ways in which they affected his life. Possibly the most interesting aspect of the letters is that they provide a vivid picture of Kazantzakis' literary activity. The various stages of the composition of his literary works are illuminated, from the writing of drafts and requests for source material (books, periodicals, dictionaries, etc.) to the publication process and the discussion of his works with his correspondents.

We cannot be sure whether Kazantzakis anticipated the collection and publication of his letters at the time when he was writing them. It seems likely that he did, at least in his later years, when his work achieved wide recognition, although at certain periods of his life he explicitly asked for confidentiality on the part of the recipients. In a letter to ChHarilaos Stefanidis of 5 September 1914 (p. 58), he even asks the recipient to tear up the letter after reading it. Fortunately for posterity, most of Kazantzakis' letters were not destroyed, but were preserved by their recipients, and remain an essential testimony to his thought and personality. Bien's comprehensive and painstaking edition now makes them accessible to the wider reading public. Through these letters, Kazantzakis emerges as a man devoted to artistic creation, passionate about the exploration of new ideas and places, and avid for communication with others. The *Selected Letters of Nikos Kazantzakis* is an indispensable book for both researchers and the general reader of Kazantzakis, and paves the way for a new appreciation and interpretation of the mind and art of this great Cretan author.

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Irene Loulakaki-Moore, *Seferis and Elytis as Translators*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2010. Pp. xv, 376.

In November 1950, while in prison-camp on Ai-Stratis, Yannis Ritsos wrote to his sister to obtain from *Librairie Kauffmann* a copy of *Beach Red* (1945), an innovative prose-poem by the American Peter Bowman.¹ Five years later under a pseudonym, Ritsos published in *Επιθεώρηση Τέχνης* 2 (1955): 98–104 a translation of certain extracts. Despite the intervening years, he had been unable to source the English text, and relied on a fragmentary French version by Jean Weil, published in *Mercure de France* in July 1950. In an endnote to his translation Ritsos explained its circumstances and justified the validity of producing a translation of a translation. While this archival trail specifically reminds us of the precariousness of the *engagé* translator-poet in post-war Greece, it offers interesting hints more generally about translation into Greek at that time: the variable availability of foreign books (even outside state prison-camps) and the importance of literary journals; the production of translations from intermediary translations and the importance of French in that regard; the continuing role of 'professional' poets in the production of translations; the translator's sense of an obligation to explain and justify his techniques.

1 Some examples are the following: the locale of Heraklion Τρεις Καμάρες is written as Τρεις Κάμαρες (p. 10), the Cretan poet Kalimerakis is twice spelled as Kalimarakis (p. 26), various transliterations are given for the same word (e.g. *Erotocritos* p. 45, but *Erotokritos* p. 191, 424, Mihael p. 26, but Mikhail Korakas p. 354), Handakas is misspelled as Handakeas (p. 353), and Zaharias Papandoniou is written as Zaharios (p. 360). Moreover, Vasilis Daskalakis is said to be 'Galatea's second husband', but her second husband was actually Markos Ayveris and Daskalakis was the husband of her sister, Elli Alexiou (p. 105).

1 Y. Ritsos, *Γλυκειά μου Λούλα* ed. Despoina Glezou (Athens 1997): 71

It is one of the virtues of her ambitious and exhaustive analysis of Seferis and Elytis as translators of poetry that Loulakaki-Moore opens up the activity of translation in modern Greece within a wide theoretical and analytical frame, which will surely aid future work on other twentieth-century Greek translator-poets, including Ritsos. Her main aim is to differentiate the translation practices of Seferis and Elytis, which have tended to be viewed as casts of the same mould and (e.g. by Vayenas) as equally unwelcome departures from the practice of earlier translator-poets, such as Palamas and Karyotakis. She succeeds in demonstrating her overall thesis, while never quite rescuing Seferis from the criticisms made of his interlingual translations at least. In the course of it, she engages convincingly with a significant body of translation theory, and produces a densely woven tapestry of close readings.

In the Introduction Loulakaki-Moore gives a concise historical survey of translation in modern Greece (stressing the importance of Vilaras and Palamas), and sets out a methodology. Summarising the relevance of Description Translation Studies and Systems Theories to her approach, she proposes to 'analyse translations in order to...manifest the translator's poetics as...inscribed in the target text'. In chapters 1–4, this yields a four-part standard for the analysis of each translation: (a) preliminary, 'peritextual' data; (b) macro-level data, such as structure; (c) micro-level analysis – e.g. lexis, grammar and syntax; and (d) context – i.e. the relationship between the translation and, on the one hand, the poetic 'home system' and, on the other hand, the poet's 'original' work (as distinct from his translations). There are some overlaps in the treatment of these categories, but they provide a solid ground for the detailed analysis to come.

Chapter 1 examines Seferis' translation of *The Waste Land*. Here Seferis' self-styled 'thoughtless attempt' is shown to fall short of the standards he set in his criticism of Eliot; even his footnotes are unreflectingly didactic. The structure of the translation matches Eliot's poem closely. At the micro-level, Seferis often resolves the ambivalence of Eliot's grammar and fails to find suitable equivalents for his varied metres. Something similar is true of his approach to intertextuality: he does not find – e.g. in Karyotakis or even Papadiamantis – Greek equivalents for Eliot's multi-vocal approach.

Chapter 2 considers the translations in Seferis' *Αντιγραφές*, and is the author's least convincing analysis. She labours hard and with many an argumentative twist and turn to show that there is thematic coherence to the poems, despite Seferis' assertion that they are not an anthology. Her surprising suggestion, in the macro-level analysis, that Seferis' interest in Yeats is a sort of hidden testimony to a debt to Karyotakis is scarcely backed up by her micro-level analysis (the apparently Karyotakian tone of the translations from Fargue and Derème is asserted without argument), and confuses her dominant thesis that Seferis chooses not to embed his translations in the home poetic system.

Chapter 3, which examines Elytis' *Δεύτερη γραφή*, is much more successful. The author is able to show clearly and convincingly (particularly in her analyses of Eluard, Jouve and Lautréamont) that Elytis both structures the material and intervenes at the micro-textual level in a strategically purposive fashion. The contrast with Ritsos' selections from Eluard is instructive. There is much to admire in this analysis, not least the author's bold conceptualization of Elytis' technique as one of 'acclimatization' (rather than 'domestication' or 'foreignizing'). Her account of the relations between Elytis' translations and his original work is fascinating. The chapter constitutes the core of the case that we must differentiate Elytis' techniques from Seferis'.

Chapter 4 examines both poets' intralingual translations: Seferis' treatment of the *Song of Songs*; Elytis' versions of Sappho and the epigrams of Crinagoras. (The author passes over both poets' intralingual prose translations.) She is able to show that here, in contrast to his interlingual translations, Seferis adopts a much more systematic (and successful) stance: a 'global strategy'. Elytis, meanwhile, continues to apply his own clear-sighted purposes to the shaping of his adaptations of Sappho and Crinagoras, and does so boldly even when closely following his French cribs.

Chapter 5 tacks in a different direction. Here, after material that might have been condensed into earlier chapters, the author considers the two poets' different attitudes to the role of intertextuality in poetry, by comparing how they approach quotation in their original poetry. This is fertile ground. The author shows convincingly that Seferis repeatedly integrates quotations into his original poetry, such as to modify and disguise them creatively (a technique she calls 'metamorphosis'), while Elytis is happy to quote without assimilation ('refraction'). This difference of approach gets to the very heart of what separates Seferis' anxiety about translation and Elytis' embrace of it.

The book is well produced, though it bears a little too evidently the stamp of its origin in the author's successful doctoral thesis. Readers without a good grasp of French, in addition to English and Greek, will often be stumped. Not all texts are as clearly cited as they might be, making some

of the close readings a tortuous experience. A friendly English proofreader would have ironed out further difficulties. Even so and despite the unpersuasive and tangled complexity of some of the analysis, the book amply proves its thesis; while showing a preference for Elytis' approach to translation, the author sensitively demonstrates Seferis' skill at creatively absorbing his translation activity into original poetry. Overall, this is an impressive work of scholarship, which marries cogent theoretical reflection with an exuberant love of close textual analysis. It should change the way we think about Seferis and Elytis as translators.

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Artemis Cooper, *Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure*. London: John Murray, 2011. Pp. 448.

When her life of Patrick Leigh Fermor was launched, Artemis Cooper declared that 'at a time when men were defined by their war, Paddy's DSO shone with a dazzling lustre'. This decoration had been awarded in immediate recognition of his pivotal role in the kidnapping of General Heinrich Kreipe on Crete in April 1944. Thanks to William Stanley Moss's 1950 account, *Ill Met by moonlight*, and the subsequent over-the-top Powell and Pressburger film, starring Dirk Bogarde as Leigh Fermor, this dashing exploit, whose military purpose remains difficult to fathom, constitutes the sum of most people's knowledge of wartime resistance in Greece. Characteristically, Michael Powell subsequently wrote that no foreigner, with the exception of Byron, had so captured the love and imagination of the Greeks. A curious aspect of the film, given that it records the derring-do of two die-hard anti-communists, is that the musical score was composed by Mikis Theodorakis.

Leigh Fermor and Billy Moss were pillars of a small, rakish group of special forces operatives who let off steam, following often extremely hazardous missions in the Balkans, in a Cairo mansion they called Tara (surely named after the Tara Plantation in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, the film of which had been released in 1939, rather than, as Cooper suggests, the legendary seat of the High Kings of Ireland). Here, in an ambience redolent of the Arabian Nights, they consumed bathfuls of industrial alcohol laced with prunes; dined at Christmas on turkey stuffed with benzedrine and, in the manner of Waugh's county families, bayed for broken glass.

As the two set off on their mission they spoke openly of the plan to kidnap a German general. Other denizens of Tara did not take such talk seriously, but the Cairo HQ of the Special Operations Executive had indeed given the go ahead for the operation, despite internal opposition. Bickham Sweet-Escott, a senior figure in SOE, was fiercely opposed on the grounds that such an escapade would serve no military objective and was certain to give rise to reprisals against civilians by German forces that had demonstrated an extreme brutality both on Crete and in mainland Greece. It would appear that the senior SOE officer in Crete, the classicist T.J. Dunbabin, also had doubts about the wisdom of the operation, as did SIS's man on the island, Ralph Stockbridge. Moreover, General Friedrich-Wilhelm Müller, who had been responsible for the worst atrocities on the island (he was executed as a war criminal in 1947) had by this time been transferred, while his successor, Kreipe, was so unpopular that his officers broke open the champagne to celebrate his abduction.

The kidnapping was carried out with great panache and *sang froid*, 'very cool, very English', as the *Observer* once put it, but it is difficult to argue with the view of M.R.D. Foot, who knew as much as anyone about SOE, that the kidnap was 'a tremendous jape.' The feared reprisals duly occurred, although the degree to which these were provoked by the 'Hussar stunt', as Kreipe himself called it, or by other acts of defiance on the part of a rebellious populace has been contested ever since. Understandably, Leigh Fermor himself was always sensitive about the reprisal issue, but his efforts to ensure that civilians were spared were doomed, inevitably perhaps, to failure. Cooper, in a display of loyalty to her subject, too readily accepts the view that the Germans used the abduction of Kreipe as mere 'window dressing' to justify the ensuing savagery, when their real motive was to cover their imminent withdrawal to the west of the island as the liberation of Greece loomed, and to implicate their troops in atrocities so that they could expect no mercy from the Cretans if they were tempted to surrender or desert. But Leigh Fermor himself recorded that, immediately after the kidnap, leaflets were dropped threatening the razing of villages and severe punishment of the civilian population if the general was not released within three days.

Hugh Dalton, who as Minister of Economic Warfare was initially responsible for the overall direction of SOE, surprisingly listed the kidnapping in his memoirs as one of SOE's major achievements. Another SOE operative, Julian Amery, called it one of the most spectacular operations of the entire war, an absurd judgement. Sweet-Escott's misgivings about the enterprise, which almost led to his being charged with insubordination, proved to be entirely justified. There were other SOE *coups de main* in Greece, notably the extraordinary feat of the destruction of the Asopos railway viaduct in June 1943, which made a much greater contribution to the war effort, but these did not bring instant fame to their protagonists.

In May 1972, almost thirty years after the kidnap, Leigh Fermor took part in a Greek 'This is Your Life' type programme broadcast on YENED, the armed forces TV channel. This brought together a number of his Cretan comrades-in-arms, together, surprisingly, with Kreipe himself. The issue of reprisals was not raised. By this time, Leigh Fermor was living much of the time in the Mani peninsula in the south of the Peloponnese, a region of Greece which had a long tradition of blood feuds (and the associated Mediterranean pele towers), resistance to Ottoman rule, and piracy, about which he had written evocatively, entertainingly and eruditely in *The Mani* (1958). It is not surprising that he should have stayed in Greece, keeping a low profile, during the Colonels' dictatorship, but it was surely somewhat tactless to have taken part in such a programme while Greece was labouring under an absurd and bitterly unpopular dictatorship.

Leigh Fermor had famously traded verses from Horace's Soracte ode with Kreipe, during their arduous trek to the south coast of the island, before being evacuated by boat to Egypt after almost three weeks on the run. Cooper reprints Leigh Fermor's translation of the ode that had appeared in the King's School, Canterbury magazine in 1930. This was a remarkable effort for a fifteen year old schoolboy, and was a portent of his subsequent brilliant career as a writer.

Artemis Cooper is an old family friend of Leigh Fermor, as was her grandmother, Lady Diana Cooper, and as is her father, John Julius Norwich. This gave her the opportunity to spend 'days on end in the company of one of the kindest, funniest and most interesting people on earth.' But this excellent book is no mere hagiography.

Leigh Fermor's most famous literary offerings, *A Time of Gifts* (1977) and *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986), were published some half a century after the events they purported to describe took place. They afford an account of his famous walk across Europe to Constantinople in the mid-1930s on which he pegs vignettes of days, weeks, in one case years, spent among a decaying East European aristocracy a few years before its world was turned upside down in the aftermath of the Second World War.

Cooper is surely correct in categorising his travel writing as involving the 'interplay of Paddy's memory and his imagination.' The contemporary evidence of his travels was in the form of a somewhat sketchy diary retrieved after the war from Princess Balasha Cantacuzene, some sixteen years older than he and with whom he had a long affair in the years before the outbreak of the war. This, Cooper records, was 'often snobbish, sometimes patronizing.'

Unlike Compton Mackenzie, who recorded his activities in Greece during the First World War on behalf of British Intelligence in three volumes, Leigh Fermor never claimed to have total recall from the age of two. Cooper demonstrates a healthy scepticism about the degree to which much of what he wrote, and, indeed, often over-wrote, is based on actual events rather than on a fertile imagination, reinforced by a highly retentive memory and prodigious subsequent reading in a wide variety of languages. Such a wealth of often recondite learning and linguistic expertise would, indeed, be scarcely credible in a young man, not yet twenty, however precocious. It is small wonder that he recoiled from the effort of producing the promised third volume of the intended trilogy on his great walk, a version of which is soon to be published.

His two books of travel in Greece, *Mani: Travels in the Southern Peloponnese* (1958) and *Roumeli: Travels in Northern Greece* (1966) are much more grounded in actuality and were composed within a much shorter time after the journeys which gave rise to them. As with the Eastern Europe described in *A Time of Gifts* and *Between the Woods and the Water*, the Greece he so affectionately and learnedly describes has in large measure disappeared. Horn gramophones are no longer to be found in cafés and the Sarakatsans, black cloaked nomadic shepherders, living in thatched huts, are now integrated into Greek society. Far from being the marginalised group, which Leigh Fermor encountered in the 1950s and early 60s, Sarakatsan ancestry is now something to be proud of. Such Greek shepherds as survive these days alert the police to rustlers on their mobile phones. Leigh Fermor clearly regretted the passing in early postwar Greece of a culture that he had first encountered in the 1930s, but he could not be serious in arguing that tourism in the 1960s constituted the most serious invasion of the country since the time of Xerxes.

Rodis Rouphos, the Greek diplomat and litterateur, was dubious about Leigh Fermor's championing of Giorgos Psychoundakis, one of his courageous and indefatigable wartime

comrades, whose wartime memoirs he translated as *The Cretan Runner* (1955). The Greek original seems never to have seen the light of day. But he warmed to Leigh Fermor's famous 'Helleno-Romaic dilemma' about which he wrote in *Roumeli*. This posits a dichotomy in every Greek between the Hellene and the Romios, between those who look to Greece's classical past and those whose cultural horizons lay in the Christian, Byzantine Empire. This, Roufos wrote, was 'one of the best analyses of the psyche of the Greeks in modern times that I have ever read.'

Occasionally Cooper lapses into the language of Jennifer's Diary, e.g. 'For this Diana [Cooper] had to thank her friend Pamela Churchill who was having an affair with [Stavros] Niarchos (after her break-up with Elie de Rothschild, and before her marriage to Leland Hayward).' We are told that the highlight of the 1952 season for Paddy and Joan Eyres Monsell, whom Leigh Fermor was subsequently to marry, was the 'unbelievably rowdy' Black and White Ball at Longleat. They stayed with the Marquess of Bath and his wife Daphne, in 'a wild party which included David and Virginia Tennant, Henrietta Moraes, Xan [Fielding, a fellow SOE operative in Crete] and Paddy, Lucian Freud and Kitty Epstein.'

At times, too, we learn a little too much about Leigh Fermor's energetic love life. One of his many conquests was Ricki Huston, the estranged fourth wife of the film director John Huston. In her words, 'most men are just take, take, take – but with Paddy it's give, give, give.' It was Ricki Huston who had once rescued him from a brawl at the Kildare Hunt Ball. Paddy, fired up by one of Oonagh, Lady Oranmore and Browne's hornet-sized but otherwise unidentified pills, asked, shades of Oscar Wilde, one of the burly huntsmen if he and his pink-coated fellows were in the habit of bugging the foxes they had cornered. Joining in the ensuing ruckus, a true donnybrook, was the sister-in-law of The McGillicuddy of the Reeks, who with a beringed fist landed a mighty biff on Paddy, which needed stitches administered during a nocturnal visit to a Dublin surgeon.

The *Daily Telegraph* may have been exaggerating when it hailed Leigh Fermor as 'one of the few genuine Renaissance figures produced by Britain in the 20th century'. Other tributes have been even more fulsome. A recent book published in Greece and subtitled *The Last English Hero* lauded him as the greatest travel writer in the world. Artemis Cooper clearly has great admiration for Leigh Fermor. But she manages to avoid such hyperbole and has clearly caught the measure of the man in a fine biography.

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